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FBIS-SOV-95-058 *27 March 1995*

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Signatures Sought To Back Union of Four CIS States

MM2403154995 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 24 Mar 95 pp 3,4

[Report by Mikhail Kushtapin from the "Commonwealth" section under the rubric "'Four Plus Everyone' Action": "Do you Want the Reunification of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine Into a Single Economic, Political, and Defense Union?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A collection of signatures for holding referendums within the framework of the "Four Plus Everyone" political action is starting in the former USSR republics.

At a sitting of the Interstate Initiative Group, representatives of Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine discussed organizational, legal, and political problems connected with the collection of signatures for conducting referendums in these republics on the question: "Do you want the reunification of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine into a single economic, political, and defense union?"

The idea of holding such referendums was announced in December of last year at the "Toward Integration—Via the Accord of the Peoples" Citizens' International Congress within the framework of the "Four Plus Everyone" political action. Initiative groups for collecting signatures have been created in all four republics. They include representatives of various parties, organizations, religions, creative unions, and industrial and entrepreneurial structures. You can judge the seriousness of the action by the list of names if nothing else. For example, these are the members of the Russian initiative group: A. Volskiy (Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs), A. Dolgolaptev ("All-Russian 'Renewal' Union" party), I. Smirnov ("Toward New Acc[illegible]"), N. Gonchar, ("Civic Union"), A. Chilingarov (International Association of Polar Explorers"), V. Grechnev, and F. Yemelin (Party of the Majority). Equally popular and prestigious are the names in the initiative groups of the three other republics. Furthermore, the membership of the Interstate Initiative Group has been left open: New members are only to be welcomed to it.

You might think, why should one conduct new referendums if no one has repealed the results of the all-Union referendum of 17 March 1991, when over 76 percent of USSR citizens advocated a renewed Union of Sovereign Republics (more details about this were given in RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA 17 March of this year). However, as was noted at the sitting, the new authorities have a very selective attitude toward the old laws and the results of the vote: What can be turned in their favor is recognized and supported, while what is not in line with their present plans is rejected or ignored. The situation is difficult as regards referendums both in Russia and in other republics. First of all, there are either no laws on them or the decision on them is adopted by none other than the president himself. In Russia, for example, millions of signatures have already been gathered in favor of holding a referendum on early elections of the president. The signatures have been collected, but the president is not in a hurry to declare a referendum.

CIS To Establish Interstate Currency Committee

MM2403151095 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 4

[Unattributed report from "Commonwealth" section under "CIS: News Items, Events, Facts" rubric: "We Will Have Our Own Currency Committee"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow—At a joint sitting of the Interstate Economic Committee Presidium and Collegium chaired by Aleksey Bolshakov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Government, the decision was made to establish an Interstate Currency Committee. This committee is being formed to organize multilateral cooperation in the sphere of currency-monetary and credit relationships, and bring closer together and improve the rules of currency circulation within the framework of the CIS.

The agreement on forming the Interstate Currency Committee was recommended for signing at the next meeting of CIS heads of state. Furthermore, on the recommendation of the Russian side the question of the expediency of the existence of the Commonwealth Interstate Bank will be examined at the meeting of CIS heads of state, since, according to Aleksey Bolshakov, the CIS Interstate Bank has still not started working normally, and the functions it has been entrusted with will now to a great extent be transferred to the Interstate Currency Committee.

Agreements on Common CIS Agricultural Market Signed

LD2303232795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1650 GMT 23 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chisinau, 23 Mar—A session of the CIS Interstate Council for Agro-Industrial Complex Questions ended today in Chisinau. Its participants signed a number of agreements regulating the creation of a common agricultural market of the CIS countries. It is expected that this will make it possible to gradually lift customs levies and go over to the free movement of agricultural produce. According to experts' preliminary information, the market, which is being created, will significantly speed up a restoration of the production level in the CIS agro- industrial complex. This will check inflation and bring down food prices.

"The decisions adopted will make it possible to coordinate the food market, pricing and investment policy, and implement joint programs in the interests of our countries," Valeriu Bulgaru, Moldova's deputy prime minister, told ITAR-TASS. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zaveryukha who attended the work of the Chisinau session, was reelected chairman of the CIS Interstate Council for Agro-Industrial Complex Questions.

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Eleven States Sign CIS Food Market Accord

MK2403105095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "CIS Food Market Accord Signed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An agreement on setting up a common food market of the Commonwealth countries has been signed proceeding from the results of the intergovernment council conference discussing matters of the agro-industrial complex of CIS-member countries. The document has been signed by representatives of 11 CIS countries with the exception of Turkmenistan. The agreement calls for phasing out customs duties within the market framework.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 25 Mar

LD2503073595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0618 GMT 25 Mar 95

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—An enlarged meeting of the Russian Government held in the Kremlin last Friday is among the main topics of today's press. The ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA newspaper carries a report delivered at the meeting by cabinet head Viktor Chernomyrdin.

The RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA newspaper, giving a summary of the report by the Russian premier, stresses his statement that the economic situation in the country remains difficult.

In turn, the TRUD newspaper, commenting on the government meeting, singles out, in the government programme "reforms and development of the Russian economy for 1995-1997" discussed at the meeting, the part where the government admits that "society displays growing weariness, disenchantment and negative attitude to reforms after six years of the crisis development".

The daily stresses that "the most disquieting thing is the declining living standards of the majority of Russian people", over 35 millions of whom live beneath the poverty line.

Commenting on the government meeting on the front page of the PRAVDA newspaper, Vassiliy Fedinin, D.Sc. (economics), claims that "only a change in the economic course and the implementation of urgent measures of state regulation to arrest the industrial slump and to beat down inflation will help to stop the slide to the precipice and to create conditions for pulling the country out of the crisis".

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA singles out a statement by Sergey Medvedev, the new press secretary of the Russian president, that Boris Yeltsin does not intend to start his re-election campaign during his coming annual leave.

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA daily reports that the president will depart for his leave by rail for Ryazan on Monday morning, noting that, in this connection, tracks have been repaired and waiting lounges have been cleaned for the third week at Moscow's Kazanskiy terminal.

The press continues to give much attention to the Chechen events. The KRASNAYA ZVEZDA newspaper features an interview with Colonel- General Leonti Shevtsov, chief of the staff of federal troops in Chechnya, who described in detail the capture of the city of Argun.

According to the general, "armour, artillery and aviation were used in a more purposeful and well thought-out way in the operation to capture Argun".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA draws a conclusion in another article that attacks on the Russian Army "are advantageous to those who are dissatisfied with its present leaders and the position of President Boris Yeltsin".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA reports that the Federation Council (Russian parliament upper chamber) drafted a bill under which Russia will not return gratis cultural values displaced to its territory as a result of the Second World War.

The IZVESTIYA newspaper features an article, claiming that Russia's property abroad is assessed at least at 100 billion U.S. dollars.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA notes in connection with the enforcement of the presidential decree on struggle against manifestations of fascism and political extremism that only concerted and resolute actions by federal authorities "are able to bridle manifestations of fascist ideology and its advocates".

In an interview with IZVESTIYA, Mikhail Krasnov, the Russian president's assistant on legal affairs, notes that manifestations of fascism in Russia "are a dangerous phenomenon of a deep-rooted nature".

In turn, the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper reminds its readers that the alliance of fascist movements in Germany, Italy and other Western countries was based on anticommunism from the very outset. The newspaper adds that "anticommunism of militant 'democrats' resembles anticommunism of fascists very much".

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA reports broad support by trade unions across the country for a decision by the executive committee of the federation of independent trade unions to stage united action day of trade unions on April 12.

PRAVDA and SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA print a report on a plenary meeting of the Russian Communist Party central committee.

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Yeltsin: Reactors, Chechnya To Be Discussed With Clinton

LD2703082495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0745 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—"The sale of Russian nuclear reactors to Iran and the situation in Chechnya will probably be the most complicated questions to be discussed at the forthcoming Russian-American talks in Moscow during U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit on the occasion of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the victory," Russian President Boris Yeltsin told journalists at the Kazan railway terminal in Moscow before leaving for vacation today.

"Many problems have accumulated which we must resolve in the nearest future," the president said responding to a question about the state of relations between Russia and the United States. "For this reason I instructed the minister of foreign affairs of Russia, Andrey Kozyrev, to discuss all these questions for the forthcoming summit with the U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and they devoted their meeting in Geneva precisely to these matters".

President Yeltsin said that final decisions on the matter would be agreed at the summit in May.

The Russian president said the heads of state from 55 countries have been invited to attend the victory day celebrations in Moscow, and he planned to meet most of them.

U.S. Strategy Still Based on 'Global War'

MM2703154795 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 3

[Article by Candidate of Military Sciences Colonel Sergey Pechurov under the "Expert Opinion" rubric: "The Pentagon Has Not Consigned 'Global War' to the Archive"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the provisions of the new edition of the "U.S. National Military Strategy," one of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee's fundamental documents, which was published in February this year, the influential WASHINGTON POST reached the conclusion that the Pentagon has revised the main guideline of U.S. military strategy and that the U.S. Armed Forces are now switching to peacemaking and other noncombat operations. However, a few days before the publication of this document, General Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, addressed the Senate Armed Services Committee where he stressed the incorrect nature of the thesis that the country's Armed Forces are being reoriented toward peacemaking, the struggle against terrorism, and so forth.

Furthermore, in his opinion the U.S. Armed Forces must be ready for the worst-case scenario—the need to conduct combat operations and achieve victory in two major regional conflicts occurring almost simultaneously (such as in the recent Persian Gulf conflict).

Is this evidence that global war is no longer an issue (even though essentially two major regional conflicts at the same time are nothing short of a "worldwide conflagration")? If you look at the speeches of U.S. officials, you will see that when they do mention such a war then it is only in passing and it is always accompanied by the mandatory clarification that such an event is possible but extremely unlikely. If you look at the superficial facts, such as the substantial reduction of the U.S. military budget, which has been going on for eight years now, the significant reduction in the numerical strength of both the strategic forces and the general purpose forces, the official enshrinement of the "regional thrust" of U.S. military strategy, you might get the impression that the U.S. Administration generally tends to remove war from the category of national security priorities.

Meanwhile, an in-depth analysis of the essence of the question shows not just that the entire arsenal of problems connected with global war still forms part of U.S. military theory and practice but also that qualitatively new approaches are being elaborated to the preparation of the Armed Forces and the country as a whole to respond to a threat on that scale.

In the late eighties, when the first signs of the USSR's disintegration began to appear, the United States came to the conclusion that it would take longer for the former Soviet military might to be restored. Initially, the Pentagon's analysts thought that this period would take between 12 and 18 months but then, after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the disintegration of the USSR, they revised that figure first to between two and five years, now even longer.

Consequently, the Americans believed, the likelihood of a surprise global confrontation between the two superpowers—the United States and the USSR/Russia—has receded. Because, to use the American terminology, this "period of strategic deterrence" will make it possible to rapidly increase the country's military potential to a level which at the very least enables it to deter a likely enemy from aggression against the United States.

It is understandable that such an approach to the assessment of the possible development of the situation enormously increases the role of intelligence which bears a special responsibility for the precise plotting [fiksatsiya] of the beginning of the likely enemy's preparations for aggression. Given the good organization and efficient operation of all tiers of control of the country's Armed Forces and the economy, U.S. analysts believe, it is possible not just to scale down military expenditure but also to considerably reduce the size of the Armed Forces. Which is what is happening now.

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Meanwhile, the U.S. military have no need to worry about whether their politicians are being over-zealous in the matter of wholesale disarmament. To this end, back in the early nineties, the U.S. Administration adopted as one of the main principles of the strategy of national security the so-called concept of "re-creation," which envisages preserving the infrastructure of the Armed Forces and the defense industry base, ensuring America's leadership in vitally important technologies, and the stockpiling of strategic materials.

The main emphasis in the implementation of the concept is placed on resolving the problem of the mobilizational deployment of America's defense industry. The architects of "re-creation" stress that an adequate response to vague and imprecise strategic warning signals could be the mobilization of the military-industrial potential rather than the mobilization and deployment of the Armed Forces.

That is why, in the late eighties and early nineties, the U.S. Department of Defense adopted the so-called strategy of "graduated mobilizational response," which divides the whole process of the mobilization of the economy into a number of independent stages. This strategy has certain advantages compared with previous approaches. For example, in the event of a crisis, plans elaborated in accordance with the strategy offer a broad range of response options and the possibility of implementing individual measures (in the event of conflicts of various scales) and all-embracing measures (in the event of global war) in the sphere of the national economy.

For example, during the Persian Gulf war, the Americans put into practice one of the stages of this strategy during which individual enterprises switched to the accelerated production of military output. In other words, they effectively carried out a "mobilization without mobilization" of the part of the military industry.

As we can see, despite the "noncombat and regional aspects" which are formally present in America's present military strategy, the U.S. leadership continues to view the unleashing of global war in the short-term, and even more so in the medium- to long-term, as a feasible but unlikely event. The fact that it is not mentioned in the latest version of the "National Military Strategy" and other documents is certainly not evidence that the U.S. leadership has abandoned its desire to adapt the country's military machine to possible future global threats. So there is no need to speak of any fundamental changes in America's military strategy today.

Primakov Cited on Nonproliferation Treaty Extension

MM2703103495 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 95 First Edition p 6

[Report by Vladimir Kostin: "Joining 'Nuclear Club' By Back Entrance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia's foreign intelligence service [FIS] has published a routine report, this time devoted to problems of extending the operation of the Nuclear Weapons Nonproliferation Treaty.

This subject has recently been discussed increasingly frequently in the foreign press. This year the deadline for the operation of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, which entered into force 5 March 1970, expires. From 12 April through 17 May an international conference will held in New York whose participants will try to agree on the treaty's further fate. It will be difficult to do this since the world community has no single view of how to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the future. Right now alongside the "nuclear five" (Russia, the United States, Britain, France, and China) several other countries (three, according to FIS data) with nuclear weapons have appeared. About 20 countries could create them if they wished. So an active struggle has developed around the nonproliferation treaty. The majority of states (over 70) including the members of the "nuclear club" favor the treaty's indefinite extension. Some are resolutely opposed to it. About 40 states agree to the treaty's extension, but with reservations.

There are also differences regarding the ways and methods of monitoring the fulfillment of the nonproliferation treaty and criticism is being leveled against the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] which has been assigned that function. So the forthcoming conference will be very difficult. Its success is by no means guaranteed. FIS experts believe that several scenarios are possible in New York.

The first is the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Weapons Nonproliferation Treaty.

The second is a departure from the indefinite scenario but the treaty's extension for a long period.

The third is the placing of the procedure for extending the treaty within a specific temporal framework linking each extension toughly to specific commitments mainly by the members of the "nuclear club."

The fourth is that some radically minded countries will try to turn the conference into a political battlefield, which essentially could lead to its disruption.

The FIS advocates the indefinite extension of the treaty while at the same time beginning work on the improvement of the monitoring mechanism. Russian intelligence analysts suggest creating a multifunctional monitoring center with a direct outlet to the UN Security Council. This center could monitor the nonproliferation not only of nuclear but also of chemical and biological weapons and also be the coordinator of all international organizations which exist and are being created for this purpose.

The new structure could be based on its own information and on information from individual countries. The intelligence services of various states could take part in the center's information policy. The FIS is ready for such cooperation.

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In his speech FIS Director Ye. Primakov touched on the question of Iran's nuclear program and possible delivery of Russian nuclear reactors to that country. According to the Russian intelligence service's information Iran does not have nuclear weapons but signs have been detected that that country has a military nuclear program. In the opinion of the FIS leader deliveries of Russian nuclear reactors to Iran cannot create conditions for the creation of nuclear weapons and so there are no grounds for sharing U.S. officials' pessimism and fears.

That statement is of a principled nature. The FIS has clearly defined its position on this delicate problem, which is now a bone of contention in Russian-U.S. relations. If the Americans again manage to impose their will on us and to thwart the deal as was the case, for instance, with deliveries of cryogenic rocket engines to India or nuclear reactors to the DPRK, no one will be able to accuse the FIS of disregarding national interests. And So Ye. Primakov has made his move and now it is up to A. Kozyrev. It remains to be hoped that our Foreign Ministry will continue worthily the game that has been begun.

Intelligence Report Details Weaknesses in Nuclear Treaty

LD2303130095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1141 GMT 23 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Semyonova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—An unclassified report of the Foreign Intelligence Service "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Prolongation Problems" presented to reporters on Thursday [23 March] sets out the advantages of this international document and also mentions drawbacks and shortcomings in the practice of its implementation.

Analysts of the Foreign Intelligence Service believe that the main drawback of the non-proliferation policy proceeds not from the contents of the treaty but from the fact that it does not apply to all states of the world community. A table is attached showing the increase of a number of states that signed and ratified the treaty from 1970 to 1995. The number grew from 62, at the time when the treaty went into effect, to 172 at present. Ever more countries were joining the treaty after the ending of the cold war.

The report points out as the most negative aspect the existence of "de-facto nuclear states" that are not parties to the treaty and that work out their own nuclear programmes. These countries are Israel, India and Pakistan. They offer a particular threat to the non-proliferation regime. Thus, in the run-up to the New York conference on the prolongation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a number of Arab countries stated that they have a negative attitude to the prolongation, motivating this by noting that Israel, which did not join the treaty, has nuclear weapons.

Another weekness of the treaty and practice of its implementation is the fact that verification of nuclear activity has drawbacks. As a result, the scientific and industrial potential created by countries which joined the treaty and those which did not, opened to them the way to possessing nuclear weapons.

Presently there exists only one smoothly functioning mechanism of international control, in the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Facts of failure of international control registered in the report should not lead to calling in question the importance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, analysts of the foreign intelligence service believe. It is necessary to perfect and develop the system of guarantees and the entire mechanism of verification.

The report not only analyses reasons for and specific cases of setbacks in IAEA safeguards, but also contains the assessments of most promising, from the viewpoint of experts of Foreign Intelligence Service, organisational and technical measures suggested by IAEA secretariat, describes positive work of a number of IAEA commissions and suggests a plan for integral multifunctional mechanism of verification functioning under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council.

Kohl in Dilemma Over 9 May Invitation to Moscow

MM2403145795 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 3

[Report by Yevgeniy Bovkun: "Chancellor Kohl Pondering How To Spend May 9 in Moscow..."]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bonn—A personal letter from President Yeltsin with an invitation to visit Moscow to attend the festivities has left the chancellor in a difficult position. For Russians 9 May is no ordinary holiday, but 8 May is for the same reason an exceptionally important day for the Germans. But people here are arguing about how best to mark it: as a liberation from fascism, as Germany's defeat in the confrontation with the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition, or more neutrally—as the end of World War II.

For the chancellor there is a great temptation to make a Solomonic decision—to leave his fellow citizens to work out for to themselves what they feel, and go to Moscow. And while there as a guest to say a few strong words to "friend Boris" about Chechnya during the interval between toasts. But how do Helmut Kohl's countrymen feel about the trip? What will the allies say about it? Will they not see it as a gesture of well-concealed revenge for the fact that last year Germany was not invited to take part in the festivities marking the anniversary of the Normandy landings? But Boris Yeltsin, who in a letter is "firmly counting" on spending 9 May in the chancellor's company, cannot be turned down either. This is an opportunity to be reconciled to Russia more reliably and

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to somewhat ease its memories of the symbolic handshake between Kohl and Reagan over the graves of SS officers in Bitburg.

Bonn is therefore rehearsing at least three options for the federal chancellor's visit to Moscow. In the first instance he could attend a parade of war veterans from the CIS to be held in Red Square and after which, as in 1945, the banners and standards of Hitler's Germany will be thrown at the foot of the mausoleum. In the second instance the important guest will watch a parade of modern military hardware, with tanks and missiles, on Kutuzovskiy Prospekt. Finally, there is an opportunity to take part in the ceremonial opening of the museum complex dedicated to the history of World War II.

But if the first option (Kohl at Lenin's mausoleum in front of a pile of regalia of the defeated Hitlerite army) will win Kohl the antipathy of the German patriots, while the second will slightly irritate his Western allies, the third should suit him best, particularly as he is a history specialist.

In any event, Bonn is already calculating how the local media and public might react to all this. Certain officials at the Federal Chancellery are understandably concerned, for instance, about the consistency with which TV news is filed from Moscow—pictures which, even without the relevant commentary will be seen very acutely by many viewers—Kohl and Yeltsin against a backdrop of Russian tanks, then pictures of the hostilities in Chechnya, and then a shot of bloodstained corpses.

It is quite obvious that any form of participation in the military parade in Moscow would be undesirable for the chancellor. On representations from him, the symbols of reconciliation should be directed not so much to the past as to the future, aiming to deepen the friendship between the Russian and German peoples.

As regards everything else the chancellor needs to be able to properly carry out his own event 8 May—the ceremonial meeting in a Berlin theater building to which it was not initially intended to invite any foreign guests. But Francois Mitterrand unexpectedly decided to grace it with his presence. And invitations to other European capitals had to be issued urgently. A dispatch was also sent to the Kremlin. But will the rank of its representative—Chernomyrdin, say—at the 8 May festivities in Berlin be equal to the rank of the Western guests? And if not, how can the chancellor justify his presence in Moscow 9 May? On the other hand, the French president will definitely be there—he was one of the first to give his consent. Maybe Mitterrand will advise Kohl on how to get out of this difficult situation.

At any rate, all of them—including Boris Yeltsin—will see each other in London 7 May at the ceremonial service to mark 50 years of peace in Europe.

Kozyrev Meets Hungarian Leaders in Budapest

LD2403185295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1729 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Dmitriy Gorokhov and Sergey Zhirnikhin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Budapest, 24 Mar—Russia has presented Hungary with a working memorandum containing its views on a new model for European security. Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told journalists of this today after his meetings with Hungarian leaders. The head of Russia's diplomacy held talks in Budapest today with Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs and had meetings with Prime Minister Gyula Horn and President Arpad Goncz.

Kozyrev expressed the view that a start should be made to the dialogue envisaged by the decisions of the OSCE's [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Budapest summit at the forthcoming meeting at the end of March of the political directors of the Foreign Ministries of 52 countries belonging to the forum of all-European interaction. In putting forward its proposals Russia is intending to promote a constructive discussion. Moscow is proposing that a dialogue be conducted on the basis of existing structures in the interests of a unified Europe.

Asked about Russia's attitude toward the plans for NATO's expansion through the Central European countries, including Hungary, joining the alliance, the Russian minister stressed that this question should not be considered in haste. Russia, he said, prefers a partnership that would satisfy all the participants in the discussion. We are against solving Europe's questions without considering the interests of other states, Kozyrev noted. I think that the decision will be found in a diplomatic dialogue.

Speaking on the problems of observing the rights of national minorities in various regions of the continent, the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry expressed concern about the situation of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic states, including Latvia and Estonia. He said this problem is still far from being solved. We discussed these questions with Mr. Kovacs as the chairman of the OSCE and I think this is one of those spheres where Hungary's special role as OSCE chair country will be most effective.

Touching upon the OSCE position with regard to the Chechen question, Kozyrev noted that the "Gyarmati mission" has a clear mandate in connection to the assistance in creating democratic power structures in Chechnya. We are talking about the prospect of making preparations for the elections on the territory of Chechnya, said the head of the Russian diplomacy.

Rybkin-led Duma Delegation Arrives in Vienna

LD2703090595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0820 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kuzmin]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Vienna, 27 Mar—A delegation of the State Duma of the Russian Federation led by its Chairman Ivan Rybkin arrived in Vienna today on an official visit.

The State Duma speaker will meet Heinz Fischer, the chairman of Austria's Nationalrat today and will speak at a news conference. Their talks are expected to focus on developing bilateral ties and expanding contacts between the Russian and Austrian Parliaments. The schedule for the three-day visit includes meetings with Austrian President Thomas Klestil, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, and other Austrian leaders.

Moscow Unable To Confirm Jet Entered Japanese Air Space

LD2403184395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1534 GMT 24 Mar 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The Russian Foreign Ministry does not have information confirming that a Russian Air Force plane made an incursion into the Japanese air space over Hokkaido on the morning of March 23 Tokyo time, a senior ministry official told Interfax Friday.

He said that the Japanese embassy told the ministry Thursday that a Japanese Foreign Ministry official had made a verbal statement to the Russian embassy in Tokyo about the incident.

The Russian Foreign Ministry official said that his ministry sent this information to appropriate Russian agencies for checking and that a response will be sent to Japan after the check is complete.

A Defense Ministry official denied any incursion into the Japanese air space by a Russian Air Force jet.

Colonel Vladimir Nikanorov, deputy head of the ministry's Information and Press Department, told Interfax that "according to the data of objective control and photographs of aircraft tracking" no such incident occurred.

Nikanorov quoted military sources as saying that "Russian fighter planes never approach the Japanese air border any closer than 20 kilometers."

Vladivostok Carried 'Retransmission' of Sect Message

LD2403111395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1045 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Lents]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vladivostok March 24 TASS—The radio address of the leader of Aum Shinrikyo—a religious sect, suspected of having staged an act of terrorism in the Tokyo underground with the use of a toxic gas—was really beamed from Vladivostok to Japan on the night of March 22, a spokesman for the radio centre of the Primorye region (Maritime territory) told ITAR- TASS Friday, but said it was only a retransmission from Moscow.

During the last broadcasting session, Asahara, head of the sect, urged his supporters to get prepared for death. The Russian radio then announced it was suspending broadcasts of the Aum sect until its activities in Japan and Russia are clarified.

According to Vladivostok radio centre staff, the programme was broadcast from Moscow on medium waves and on the frequency of 1,476 kHz from 00.00 to 03.00 in the morning, Tokyo time (from 18.00 to 21.00, Moscow time). The capacities in Vladivostok were used only for retransmission of the medium waves, which are convenient for reception in Japan. According to Primorye specialists, the programme was broadcast to Vladivostok from Moscow by the commercial IP-111 channel. In the daytime the transmitter in Vladivostok broadcasts the "Youth Channel" programme, and at night—programmes of that commercial channel.

ITAR-TASS Director Visits Japanese Embassy Over Gas Threats

LD2703104995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1036 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Krasnov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—ITAR-TASS director-general Vitaliy Ignatenko on Monday visited the Japanese embassy to Russia and expressed gratitude to ambassador Koji Watanabe for prompt assistance in ensuring safety of journalists of the news agency in Tokyo in connection with threats addressed to ITAR-TASS bureau in Tokyo.

As ITAR-TASS correspondent Vasiliy Golovnin reported from Tokyo, there was a telephone call to ITAR-TASS late on Sunday evening. The anonymous caller warned that the news agency's bureau will shortly come under an attack. The caller said that nerve gas sarin will be used for the attack, just as during the terrorist act in the Tokyo underground on March 20.

ITAR-TASS staffers immediately got in touch with the police which took a very serious view of the threat. The police immediately established protection of the bureau. Its staffers were informed that in case of need a unit of special mobile police trained for operating in conditions of a chemical attack will give assistance.

The night passed calmly but, as an officer of the police agency of Tokyo district Yoiogi said, this does not mean that there is no threat any longer. The officer said that the staffers should remain on guard and that the situation around the ITAR-TASS building in Tokyo will be under police control for certain time.

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Quite possibly, the treats to the Tokyo bureau of ITAR-TASS may be connected with an investigation conducted by ITAR-TASS journalists in Russia and in Japan in connection with the circumstances of the subversive act in the Tokyo underground and the activity of Aum Shinrikyo sect suspected of preparing that terrorist act. There is special interest in reports about the "Russian trace" of Aum Shinrikyo which has six centres in Moscow alone and tries to recruit followers.

The Japanese ambassador told Ignatenko that the japanese authorities feel obliged to ensure the safety of staffers of ITAR-TASS and of representatives of other foreign mass media in japan. The ambassador expressed the hope that the Japanese police will soon reveal the circumstances of the terrorist act in the Tokyo underground and of the present threat and that journalists of ITAR-TASS will be able to discharge their duties in a calm atmosphere.

Moscow Ready To Resolve Korean Crisis With Own Reactors

LD2403211495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1904 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Ivan Zakharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—The stance of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the solution of the nuclear problem in Korea remains unchanged: Russia is prepared to deliver its light-water nuclear rectors to the Korean People's Democratic Republic as a means of pulling North Korea out of the complicated situation which is taking shape on the Korean Peninsula.

ITAR-TASS learned this today from a high official of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation. The official was commenting on the American-North Korean negotiations due to began in Berlin on Saturday. The two countries are expected to discuss ways of implementing Pyongyang's earlier promise to give up its nuclear programme, which causes concern in the world, in exchange for alternative energy sources.

North Korea wants to "freeze" its graphite-moderated nuclear installations which can produce weapons-grade Plutonium, and the United States pledges to establish an international consortium in order to build two safe reactors in the north of the peninsula.

South Korea pledged to pay a lion's share of the cost of the reactors valued at four billion American dollars on condition that North Korea would accept South Korean reactors. Seoul's activity jars North Korean sensibilities, and Pyongyang has even threatened to give up the whole project if the United States continued to push the South Korean plan.

The Republic of Korea and the Korean People's Democratic Republic do not officially recognise each other as legitimate states. Moreover, they have been formally at war since the 1950-1953 armed conflict.

The Russian Foreign Ministry official expressed apprehension that "everything might return to the starting point". Since the thing in question is the nuclear nonproliferation principles on the peninsula, they "cannot be supplanted with commercial interests," the official said.

"The choice of Russian reactors as an alternative to South Korean might serve as a compromise solution which the two parties should seek instead of aggravating their relations," the Russian official stressed.

He rejected Seoul's assertion that Russian light-water reactors were unable to meet the necessary safety requirements. "These and other performance characteristics of the new-type nuclear power installations developed in Russia in the 90's exceed those offered by Seoul," he said.

Along with this, the Russian official said South Korea, the United States or another country could well supply systems ensuring Russian reactor safety.

Commentary on U.S.-DPRK Conflict on Nuclear Reactors

SK2503121595 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Korean 1200 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Commentary by Aleksey Kondratyev from the "Today's World" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] A U.S. State Department spokesman threatened that the UN Security Council will apply sanctions against the DPRK if Pyongyang operates its frozen graphite-moderated reactors. Station commentator Aleksey Kondratyev writes:

Such a threat by the United States to the DPRK has a [word indistinct]. In accordance with an agreement with the United States, Pyongyang froze its nuclear program and agreed to replace its graphite-moderated reactors with safer reactors. As a result, doubts by the United States and other countries about DPRK's nuclear development have been dispelled completely.

Lately, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula has become an object of discussion.

What is behind the conflict between Pyongyang and Washington? The essential contention between the two countries is that Pyongyang strongly rejects U.S. insistence on the provision of ROK-style light-water reactors to the DPRK.

Experts in Korean affairs have expressed the hope that Russian- style light-water reactors can be provided, believing that the ROK- style light-water reactors are not safe. All DPRK leaders believe that Washington's pressure originates from its selfish intention to achieve its political purposes.

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Pyongyang has recently and clearly expressed that it will withdraw the freezing of its nuclear facilities if an agreement on the light-water reactors is not signed by 21 April. The conflict in opinions between Pyongyang and Washington has reached its peak with the approach of the DPRK-U.S. talks to be held in Berlin on 25 March. We do not need to predict the results of the Berlin negotiations under such circumstances. I would like to emphasize that resolving the issue of denuclearization on the Korean peninsula is becoming more and more difficult.

Russians Examining Iranian Nuclear Power Station

LD2203122595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1030 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Mar 22 (Interfax)—Russia has started examining the state of the uncommissioned power unit of an Iranian nuclear power station under a contract signed in January. The facility is 80-90

ready.

A spokesman for Zarubezhatomenergostroi company building nuclear power facilities abroad told Interfax a preliminary analysis indicated that the equipment that has been kept in technical premises for over 10 years is in good condition with almost no signs of corrosion.

The devices kept in zinc containers filed with nitrogen are in an ideal state and can be used at any moment.

The station was built in the 1970s by Siemens Kraftwerke Union (Germany).

In the opinion of Russian experts, electric equipment requires complete replacement because it does not function or meet the requirements of designers.

The company representative said that by September the Russian side will submit to Iran the final report on the state of the uncommissioned plant. Also in September Russian experts plan to hand in technical supplements to the contract.

According to Yuri Perekryostov, there are about 200 Russian experts in Busher, but after most of the study work ends in May the number will drop and preparations for construction will begin.

The $800 million contract provides for the assembly of equipment and the launching of the first 1000 megawatt power unit by the year 2000. The Russian side will deliver the bulk of the equipment, primarily reactors and turbines.

The project has been sharply criticized by a number of Western countries, primarily the United States that is threatening to stop nuclear cooperation with Moscow if it does not give up its plans to deliver nuclear reactors to Tehran.

Meanwhile, Russian nuclear experts deny assumptions that the facility could be used for military purposes. The Deputy Minister for Nuclear Energy Lev Ryabev told Interfax that the light water reactors cannot be used for making military plutonium. Plutonium can be extracted, but its qualities make it unfit for producing a nuclear bomb, the official stressed.

Gaydar: Russia 'Serious' in Nuclear Cooperation With Iran

LD2403201895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian is serious about its cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and others should not be concerned. This was emphasized by Yegor Gaydar, leader of the Russia's Choice faction in the Russian Duma, in a meeting with the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Friday. He said we want to expand cooperation between the two countries without interference from others.

He said that the recent trip by a Russian parliamentary delegation to Iran was successful and that he is interested in visiting the Islamic Republic of Iran and inspecting developments in our country.

Bilateral Cooperation Discussed With Tehran

LD2503110595 Tehran IRNA in English 0948 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 25, IRNA—Iran's Ambassador to Russia Medhi Safari voiced Tehran's readiness to host the first meeting of interparliamentary Association of the Caspian Sea Littoral States.

In a meeting with Deputy Chairman of the Russian State Duma Mikhail Mityukov here Friday, Safari discussed bilateral cooperation in all areas.

Mityukov who paid a visit to Iran recently at the head of a parliamentary delegation, described his visit as "effective" and said he had briefed Russian President Boris Yeltsin on the outcome of his visit and conveyed to him a message from his Iranian counterpart, 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

The official announced readiness of the speaker of the Russian State Duma, Ivan Rybkin, to pay a visit to Iran in a near future.

Referring to the role and position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, Mityukov welcomed the idea that the first meeting of interparliamentary Association of the Caspian Sea Littoral States be held in Iran.

Volskiy Iran Visit Viewed

MM2703134095 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 95 First Edition p 6

[Report by Aleksey Solodov: "By Helping Your Neighbor You Help Yourself"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] "Why can they do it but not us?" Arkadiy Volskiy rightly asked indignantly at a press conference in Tehran commenting on the report that the United States is trying to exert pressure on Iran with a view to preventing the construction of a nuclear electric power station in that country with Russia's aid. He has in mind the speech delivered in the Senate by Robert Pelletreau, the U.S. Secretary of state's aide for Near East countries, who stated that the United States is making efforts to put pressure on the Tehran regime to make it abandon "the policy which is angering the international public and presents a threat to peace."

At the same time, as we know, the Americans themselves intend to deliver to the DPRK a reactor of the same type as Russia is building in the Iranian city of Bushehr using similar technology and with the relevant protection. Moreover, Russian nuclear specialists have given a firm guarantee that the Bushehr nuclear electric power station reactor is extremely reliable and cannot be used to create nuclear weapons, which accords with Iran's desires. And the Iranian side itself is most concerned that the contract be fulfilled and that no U.S. pressure should influence the decision that is made. After all, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, in a recent interview with the Italian magazine panorama speaking of agreements between Iran and Russia in the field of nuclear energy, stressed that it is a case of constructing a strictly civilian establishment. And Hans Blix, the head of the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency], stressed that the IAEA, which is monitoring Iran's activity in the nuclear field, relies on the full support of the Iranian Government.

The result is that the fears of the U.S. State Department and some U.S. senators regarding the nuclear electric power station in Bushehr is nothing other than a kind of "double standards policy" on the part of the United States, dictated by considerations of economic expediency.

However that may be, the realities of the development of Russian- Iranian relations recently have been such that a tangible positive advance can be observed in the field of trade and economic cooperation. And that was shown in particular by the recent trip to Tehran by Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. One important result was that Iran and Russia have reached "agreement in principle" regarding the production of Il-114 aircraft in Iran. The aircraft of the latest model, numbering 70 according to preliminary agreements, will be assembled from Russian units, components, and engines at an Iranian plant.

But the most serious of the joint Russian-Iranian projects now being implemented is the construction of a subway in Tehran. According to the plan the first train should pass through as early as the spring of 1996 although unforeseen difficulties have arisen here in connection with the fact that "in the struggle to obtain the contract for the delivery of cars and other equipment China has vanquished competitors from Russia, Germany, and South Korea." This decision is connected with the fact that the Chinese side has voiced the readiness to supply the Iranian side with a credit of $430 million for the purpose. But previously it was planned that Russian cars would be used. That has displeased Moscow.

There are also unresolved problems in Russian-Iranian economic relations. The main ones are the Iranian debt to Russia (in particular for deliveries of arms and agricultural machinery), the development of the Caspian Sea shelf, and the system of reciprocal payments.

It is believed that the "two revolutions"—the collapse of the USSR and the Islamic revolution in Iran—have considerably complicated the situation and it is very difficult now to recalculate mutual debts: After all, Russia was also indebted to Iran for gas delivered to the USSR. And that problem could remain "hanging" for a long time. That is why the sides are now working out all questions when signing contracts, so that the situation is not complicated still further. Thus, Iran is prepared to supply Russia with oil equipment, providing a credit of $2 billion, while Russia is prepared to supply Iran with another diesel-powered submarine, but on at least prepayment terms.

But specialists believe that all questions of Russian-Iranian relations are entirely soluble, especially as they are now built on the basis of mutual advantage and respect for reciprocal interests in the region and the world. It is curious in this connection to cite two statements. Thus, at a recent meeting with Dmitriy Ryurikuov, the Russian president's assistant for international issues, who noted that Russia and Iran have common interests in the Persian Gulf zone and Central Asia, Mekhdi Safari [name as transliterated], the new Iranian ambassador in Moscow, stated: "The Iranian president attaches great importance to relations with Russia. I have received from him instructions to boost the level of these relations. On the agenda is a visit by the Russian president to Iran and we are engaged in preparing this visit." The second statement is from A.A. Velayati who, answering a question by PANORAMA, noted that Moscow is trying to mitigate the suffering of the Iraqi people. "Moscow also wants to restore its old ties with Baghdad, and that is also understandable."

Yeltsin To Visit Ukraine in First Half of 1995

LD2403134395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1313 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow march 24 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin will visit Ukraine in the first half of this year, as soon as the problem of the Black Sea Fleet's division is settled, Yeltsin's spokesman Sergey Medvedev said on Friday [24 March].

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When general provisions of a corresponding treaty are defined, there will be no obstacles for the Russian-Ukrainian summit, Medvedev said.

Navy 'Experts' Reject Ukrainian Suggestions on Fleet

LD2403161595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1350 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Experts on the payroll of the Russian Navy's general staff refused to accept the Ukrainian suggestions for the fate of the Black Sea Fleet. The experts are working on a Declaration on the principles for the division of the Black Sea Fleet.

They feel that Ukraine took a tougher stand and attempts to go back on earlier agreements on the Fleet problem.

It attempts to dictate its will on both separation of bases and division of Fleet property, the experts say. Kiev insists, among other things, that the Ukrainian Navy be headquartered in Sevastopol whereas Moscow feels that the headquartering of both Russian Black Sea Fleet and Ukrainian Navy in Sevastopol will complicate relations between the naval commands. It suggests that the Ukrainian Navy be headquartered and based at Donuslava, 140 kilometers eastwards of Sevastopol.

Moscow shows special concern about the Ukrainian demand for the withdrawal of the Fleet's aircraft and Marine elements. And, the Black Sea Fleet needs more docking space in Sevastopol, it says.

Duma Decree, Statement on Ukrainian Decisions on Crimea

MM2703154895 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 95 First Edition p 4

[Decree No. 603-1 SD of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly "On the Statement by the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly 'On Its Attitude Toward the Ukrainian Supreme Council's Decisions on the Crimea,'" signed by I.P. Rybkin, chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly, and dated 22 March 1995, Moscow; plus text of State Duma statement]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly decrees:

The statement by the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly "On Its Attitude Toward the Ukrainian Supreme Council's Decisions on the Crimea" is adopted.

[Signed] I.P. Rybkin, chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly
[Dated] 22 March 1995, Moscow

Statement by the State Duma on Its Attitude Toward the Ukrainian Supreme Council's Decisions on the Crimea

The State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly,

confirming its interest in establishing relations of friendship and strategic partnership with Ukraine, expressed in the appeal of 4 May 1994 by the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly to deputies of the Ukrainian Supreme Council and Crimean Supreme Council and in the statement of 23 November 1994 by the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly "In Connection With the Ukrainian Supreme Council Decree of 17 November 1994 'On Implementing the Ukrainian Supreme Council Decree 'On the Political and Legal Situation in the Crimean Autonomous Republic,'"

mindful of the appeal by the president of the Republic of Crimea and the statement by the Crimean Supreme Council in connection with the decisions adopted 17 March 1995 by the Ukrainian Supreme Council on the Crimea,

and based on the principles of equality, the peoples' right to decide their own fate, and states' sovereign equality and territorial integrity enshrined in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe of 1 August 1975,

declares its serious concern over the prospects for Russian- Ukrainian relations in connection with the decisions adopted by the Ukrainian Supreme Council, which debase the Crimean Republic population's will and break off the treaty talks process between the Crimea and Ukraine, and which could seriously destabilize the situation in the region.

The State Duma, taking the Russian Federation itself as an example, notes the lack of an alternative to political dialogue as the universal method making it possible to avoid the tragic consequences of an escalation of an internal conflict. The attention being shown by our colleagues in the Ukrainian Supreme Council to the complex problems of establishing new Russian statehood allows us to urge them to be restrained and patient and to observe the rights and freedoms of citizens in the Crimea.

The extraordinary, hasty decisions of the Ukraine Supreme Council, which were in our view adopted without regard for the whole range of possible political and legal consequences and their influence on Russian-Ukrainian relations as a whole, cannot fail to be reflected in the State Duma's discussion of all the problems regarding the Russian-Ukrainian talks, including questions of restructuring Ukraine's debts, dividing the Black Sea Fleet, and the status of its main base—Sevastopol. The State Duma again recommends that, when the current situation is discussed during talks with the Ukrainian side, the Russian Federation Government

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take account of the Crimean inhabitants' legal interests and the results of the expression of their will and listen to representatives of the Republic of Crimea.

The State Duma calls on the legally elected organs of power of Ukraine and Crimea to show the maximum goodwill in the quest for compromises based on respect for all constitutional rights and freedoms. We express the hope that Black Sea Fleet personnel will help to preserve stability and eliminate provocations and threats to the lives and the security of the Crimea's inhabitants.

Covert Exercises Suspected as Reason for Telephone Cut Off

LD2503190995 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Tatyana Mitkova] All local telephones have been disconnected for over 24 hours in the headquarters, and in the premises of the command of the Black Sea Fleet in the city of Sevastopol. The city authorities have justified this by the fact that the Black Sea Fleet has not paid their phone bills. However, Andrey Grachev, the head of the press center of the Black Sea Fleet, said today that home telephones of all commands and officers close to Admiral Baltin, the commander of the fleet, have also been cut off. The official line is that the city sewage pipe has broken down, said Grachev. However, this version does not sound plausible: Officers of the Black Sea Fleet who now have no telephone line reside in different parts of the city, said Grachev. It appears that some kind of exercises are taking place in Sevastopol, which we have not been notified about, he added in conclusion.

We received this report from the NTV's Crimea correspondent.

Sanctions Against Estonia Demanded After Russian Deported

LD2303210395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1802 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 23 (Interfax)—The leader of the Russian All-People Union, State Duma (lower house of parliament) deputy Sergey Baburin, has demanded economic sanctions against Estonia as a state violating human rights. The statement, published by the movement Thursday, followed the Estonian authorities' decision to deport Petr Rozhok, a Russian citizen and the chairman of the Tallinn Union of Russian Citizens, from the republic on March 22.

In its statement, Baburin demanded Russia's president, government and parliament impose a ban on Russian vessels' entry into Estonian seaports and Russian state-run and private companies' transactions with Estonian legal entities, transiting goods through the republic and cut off Russian gas supplies.

Russia should not wait for other countries to react, but "act first as responsible for each of its citizens," the statement stipulated.

Duma Votes for Economic Sanctions Against Estonia

LD2403212695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1834 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—With 241 votes for, the State Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, unanimously proposed Friday that Russian President Boris Yeltsin impose economic sanctions against Estonia until it brings its legislation in line with international conventions on human rights.

The decision followed the Estonian authorities' attempt to deport Petr Rozhok, a Russian citizen and one of the leaders of the Russian community, from the republic.

The chairman of the Russian All-People Union, Sergey Baburin, proposed another, much tougher option which would mean cutting off gas supplies, banning Russian vessels from entering Estonian ports, stopping the transit of Russian goods through Estonia and prohibiting Russian companies' commercial operations with Estonian legal entities.

However, the deputies opted for a softer option proposed by the chairman of the parliamentary committee for international affairs, Vladimir Lukin.

Russia Protests to Estonia Against Deportation

LD2503154495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1524 GMT 25 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Yuriy Kozlov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—The Russian Foreign Ministry on Saturday voiced a resolute protest against the gross violation by Estonian officials of the legitimate rights of a Russian citizen living in Estonia.

The urgent deportation of Petr Rozhok deprived him of the possibility of upholding his rights, which is a violation of the European convention on human rights and basic liberties, as well as Estonian law, the ministry said in a statement.

The Estonian authorities deported Rozhok from the country before a court decision was passed on his case. They deprived him even of a residence permit, though he did not have one yet, the document noted.

The outright violation of generally accepted international norms on human rights is obviously of an instigating character and was inspired by the forces seeking to block the normalization of Russian-Estonian relations, which became possible following the recent elections in the country, the Russian Ministry emphasised.

"Unfortunately, we have to admit that these forces still have a considerable influence upon the official Tallinn's attitude towards Russian citizens living in Estonia. In

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elaboration of the already existing state system of discrimination against and the gradual "soft" squeezing out of non-ethnic Estonians, now we have a precedent of the use of force for achieving this objective, which cannot but provoke response from Russia", according to the statement.

The Russian Foreign Ministry also warned the Estonian authorities that the issue of mass violations of human rights in Estonia would be raised by Russia in the OSCE and other international organizations.

Gromov Interviewed on New Foreign Ministry Role

LD2103201495 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1600 GMT 21 Mar 95

[Interview with former deputy defense minister Gen. Boris Gromov by unidentified interviewer; data and place not given—live or recorded; from the "Rush Hour" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt]

[Interviewer] Boris Vsevolodovich, could you ever imagine while in charge of the 40th Army in Afghanistan that in March 1995 you would be a diplomat at the Foreign Ministry - the Foreign Ministry of Russia, not the USSR.

[Gromov] Even considering that it is difficult to foresee things in Russia in our times, anyway, I most certainly could never have foreseen what the future held for me, after the troops had been withdrawn from Russia.

[Interviewer] All the latest events around you and your name are very dramatic. You were first dismissed from the Defense Ministry. Then you were transferred to the Foreign Ministry. At first you seemed to have kept the post of deputy defense minister. Then it turned out that you did not. Your staff had to defend themselves while they were being literally pushed out of your offices. What does all this mean?

[Gromov] You know, I would not have liked to go into any great detail about it, blaming other people. I do not think personalities are important in the current scheme of events. I believe everything that has now happened is none of my doing. That is the main thing. The fact is that in the future things will become clear to the people who were active in the affair, including those who were against me. It is beneath my dignity to say any more. I think that my current appointment and my current occupation will enable me to live on and work in the future and to do the things which I do not, let us say, detest.

[Interviewer] What are your plans for the future? Before you answer this question, I want to recall your reply to the same question in the "Top Secret" program about a year ago. [Passage omitted: a clip of a year-old interview with Gromov is played, where Gromov said he did know what the future held for him]

[Gromov] Life itself prompts answers. It has now found this solution for me. I do not want to say that I am now a diplomat. That would be too loud a title for me. The good thing about my new post is that I will be dealing with the same issues that I used to deal with at the Defense Ministry, but perhaps on a broader scale. I will be tackling military and political issues in our state's foreign policy, in other words, issues relating to security. [Passage omitted: six years ago Gromov was appointed deputy interior minister under Gorbachev, interviewer recalls. Gromov explains it was good for him to work in various ministries. Gromov declines to answer the question as to whether it will be possible for him to return to the Defense Ministry under Grachev]

[Interviewer] How were you received at the Foreign Ministry. Have you talked to Kozyrev? How are you going on there? After all, you may find it difficult to get on with people there, too. What will you do then?

[Gromov] I must say I have been received very well there, since I am not a person who likes conflicts. And while working at the Defense Ministry I used to have many contacts at the Foreign Ministry, since we were working on the same issues, in particular on the Commonwealth of the Independent States, and on the collective security of the CIS, including issues connected with the peace- keeping activities of the Defense Ministry. Because of these issues I had to be permanently in touch with the Foreign Ministry. [Passage omitted: another clip is played, showing captions of quotes from a Gromov interview to the newspaper ARGUMENTY I FAKTY where Gromov says that his relations with Grachev were normal but that it was true that attempts were made to damage them]

[Interviewer] I think that you have views of your own on Russia's foreign policy. Do you share all Kozyrev's opinions?

[Gromov] I meet the foreign minister quite frequently, and I am grateful that he took me along with him several times to work in other countries. As far as the issues for which I was responsible on these trips are concerned, the minister's approach, I think, coincided and is coinciding with the interests of our country, and with Russia's position as a whole. In the past there might have been some areas where I misunderstood things. Now however I understand them, and I have completely changed my views on these questions. I have in mind the issue of the Partnership for Peace program or some such things directly related to our country's security. While last year when this issue was discussed, I approached it from one angle as I believed that we followed wrong policies on some of the issues. Now that I have looked more closely at the points of view of other people, I have changed my view somewhat.

[Interviewer] At his book presentation recently Kozyrev said that Russia is respected more than the USSR was 10 years ago. Do you agree with this?

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[Gromov] How can I answer that question? Andrey Vladimirovich [Kozyrev] knows better. He travels around the world much more than I do. [Passage omitted: interviewer asks Gromov why Grachev sacked most of his aides. Gromov says he does not want to talk about any personalities and does not want to name any names]

[Interviewer] Would you support any serious purge in the army after the Chechen campaign. Is it really needed?

[Gromov] I am dead against any purges, particularly political purges in the army. Nor is there any reason whatever for a purge after the Chechen operation. After all, the whole of the Chechen saga is pointless, anyway. Therefore the removal of officers and generals who behaved there, following their own common sense will cause even more damage than the actual Chechen epic. [Passage omitted: voice-over quotes General Aleksandr Lebed's description of Gromov as a brilliant organizer.]

[Interviewer] What is your attitude toward Aleksandr Lebed?

[Gromov] Lebed has a lot of experience, as an Afghan veteran. But of course an army commander, which is what he is, needs a wealth of experience. He has very many good and bright ideas. His thinking and his vision of situations are original. But nevertheless he would benefit from a little bit more experience both at work and in life. [Passage omitted: an excursus into history: Finnish war]

[Interviewer] Do you see as a threat the expansion of NATO right up to Russia's borders?

[Gromov] I believe this is bad. NATO expanding by absorbing other states damages our normal relations. It is not nice to take a course at breaking and spoiling them. Second, the actual fact is damaging the agreements which have already been signed and are now being enforced. Third, it will damage the agreements which are now in the process of preparation, specifically the one on the strategic offensive weapons,two. If you say that you want to rid the planet of nuclear arms, you must not take steps in the opposite direction. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Statute Gives Kozyrev Sweeping Powers

MK2403115095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Abarinov under the "Reform" rubric: "Statute on Foreign Ministry: Letter and Spirit. From Now On, the Minister Will Not Only Devise and Carry Out, But Also Analyze Foreign Policy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Public opinion, carried away by domestic policy developments, has clearly underestimated reform at the Foreign Ministry. Meanwhile, the changes are so striking that they give one grounds to talk not only about a drastic reorganization of the Russian diplomatic service, but also about the utmost simplification of the decisionmaking process on key political issues. How Andrey Kozyrev has managed to do that is another matter. One thing is clear, however: since World War II we have never had a foreign minister entrusted with so wide-ranging powers.

The statute on the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry, not a single letter of which has leaked into the press before the paper legally went into force, is aimed first of all at strengthening the president-minister axis. From now on no one and nothing can mar relations between Yeltsin and Kozyrev. The Security Council is not even mentioned in the document. The government? It confirms the nominations of board members who do not sit on it "ex officio," that is, department directors. The Duma? A rhetorical question. The powers of the ministry and the minister, on the contrary, will be broadened in an unprecedented fashion. The Foreign Ministry determines "the general strategy of Russian foreign policy" and realizes the "foreign policy line of the Russian Federation," coordinates and supervises relevant activity of other federal bodies "for the purpose of ensuring the pursuance of a single political line of the Russian Federation in relations with foreign states and international organizations," and also has the right to "make enforceable decisions within the purview of its jurisdiction binding on other federal bodies of the executive authority." No procedure for agreeing on or approving the minister's candidacy by the legislative branch is required—the foreign minister, along with his deputies, will be appointed by the president. Department directors and chiefs of other Foreign Ministry chapters will be appointed by the minister. He also makes recommendations on appointing and recalling ambassadors and state and government delegation heads. Since ambassadors and heads of delegations are to be appointed by the president, no additional agreements will be required.

The minister's relations with the ministry board are particularly noteworthy. The board makes decisions by a simple majority of votes, after which the minister issues relevant orders in furtherance of these decisions. But what is to be done if the minister finds himself in a minority? Do as follows: "In case of disagreements between the minister and the ministry board, the minister carries out his decision, while reporting the disagreements to the president or the Russian Federation Government according to an established procedure. Board members who have a dissenting view on a decision that has been made may also report it to the president or the Russian Federation Government respectively." The CPSU Rules called the dubious right of any party member to appeal right to the general secretary "democratic centralism." I would like to see a board member (particularly one appointed by the minister and approved by the government) who would venture to convey his dissenting opinion to the president.

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What did we get as a result? We have already written that, in our view, Andrey Kozyrev has brilliantly managed to thwart attempts to set up an interdepartmental body with coordinating and supervising functions with regard to foreign policy in the presidential administration. The statute on the Foreign Ministry has prompted us to look at this question from a different angle. This body has effectively been constituted in the person of the minister himself.

In this regard the decision to set up an analytical-forecasting center at the Foreign Ministry appears quite understandable. At first sight, the new agency should be heartily welcomed. But the presidential administration has an analytical center of its own. The problem is that presidential analysts are not subordinate to the foreign minister. An analytical memo may find its way onto the presidential desk over the minister's head. It is difficult to carry out the "general strategy of foreign policy" in such conditions.

Now what the Russian Foreign Ministry needs even more than independent analysts is independent commentators. Bureaucrats on Smolenskaya Square have already become accustomed to expressing themselves in newspeak of the good stagnation era. An attributed statement has become a great rarity. Now and again diplomats utter gross banalities, hiding behind the title of "a high-ranking Russian diplomat" or "a knowledgeable source in the Russian Foreign Ministry." "A source close to an answering machine," was how journalists dubbed such informers. Well, the statute on the Foreign Ministry does not say that it is obliged to brief public opinion on its activity after all.

A nomenklatura comeback, about which Kozyrev used to warn some time ago, has successfully come about.

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Political Issues

Yeltsin Chairs Security Council V-Day Schedule Meeting

LD2303212795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2029 GMT 23 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 23 TASS—The Russian Security Council met on Thursday [23 March] under the chairmanship of President Boris Yeltsin to approve the schedule of V-Day celebrations in Moscow.

Two military parades will be held in Moscow on May 9, a foot parade of World War II veterans on Red Square and a parade of heavy materiel on Poklonnay Gora, where a memorial complex is being built to mark the victory over fascist Germany in World War II, according to a well-informed source at the presidential staff.

According to the source, Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov told the meeting that the construction of the memorial complex would be completed according to the schedule.

About 55 foreign delegations are to attend the festivities on V-Day, including those headed by French President Francois Mitterand, U.S. President Bill Clinton and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

According to the president's press service, "the schedule of celebrations was worked out with due regard for proposals of war veterans, Moscow residents, CIS public and state organizations, and members of the anti-Hitler coalition".

Yeltsin Issues Edict on Destruction of CW Stocks

LD2503104695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1008 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has issued an edict "On preparing the Russian Federation for fulfilling its international obligations in the sphere of chemical disarmament," the press service of the President of the Russian Federation informed ITAR-TASS today.

The document states, in particular, that Russia's stocks of chemical weapons [CW] are to be destroyed in the areas where they are stored, at facilities which are being specially created for this purpose. Their sites will be agreed with the relevant components of the federation. Emphasis was laid on the necessity, when setting up such facilities, to ensure the accelerated development of the social infrastructure of the regions where they are located and also to pay primary attention to ensuring the safety of people and the protection of the environment.

The head of state has also issued instructions to the committee for problems arising from conventions on chemical and biological weapons under the country's president and to a number of other departments to draw up a plan of measures aimed at speeding up the preparation of the Russian Federation for fulfilling its international obligations in the sphere of chemical disarmament and to present it to the government within two months for confirmation.

Further, the Russian president confirmed, by the same edict, the distribution of duties between the federal bodies of executive power in carrying out work to prepare the Russian Federation for fulfilling its international obligations in the sphere of chemical disarmament. An interdepartmental commission on chemical disarmament has also been set up. Yuriy Baturin, aide to the President of the Russian Federation on national security, has been put in charge of this commission.

Baturin Comments on Yeltsin CW Edict

LD2503181095 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Tatyana Mitkova] President Yeltsin signed edicts defining Russia's policy in chemical disarmament. The title of one of them is: On the preparation of the Russian Federation in fulfilling its international obligations in chemical disarmament. This edict establishes inter alia, that chemical weapons stored in Russia are to be destroyed in their storage areas at installations designed and built for this purpose; this should be agreed with the local authorities. The document emphasizes the need to ensure that, as such installations are being built, the social infrastructure of areas bordering on test ranges should be developed, and people's safety and protection of the natural environment should be taken care of. An interdepartmental Commission on Chemical Disarmament has been set up; Yuriy Baturin, the president's aide for National Security, has been appointed as its head, says the presidential press service. Yuriy Mikhaylovich Baturin today gave an exclusive interview to our program in connection with this important decision of the Russian leadership.

[Begin Baturin recording] In fact, in January 1993 Russia signed a multilateral convention on banning chemical weapons that is due to take effect in 1995, as was confirmed in the Russian-U.S. statement last year. However, it emerged almost instantly that Russia was not prepared, or rather was poorly prepared to implement the measures envisaged by this convention, to the destruction of chemical weapons for example. That is why, back in 1994, the president issued an instruction on the preparation of this edict. Reaching agreement on this edict was a long and painful process. You know that many such installations are located close to settlements, and let us be open about it—even inside settlements. There are federal roads and highways nearby, oil pipelines, rivers—the source of drinking water for these localities, and many other facilities. All this is woven into a complex set of problems. Naturally, the regions were against this: They did not want the destruction to take place on their territory. The edict brings a certain

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clarity to this situation at last. It has now been established that the destruction is due to take place at purpose-built facilities in the storage places. However, all the issues related to the research and development and construction of these facilities, as well as all other issues must absolutely be agreed with the members of the federation, as a certain compensation, the building of these facilities will be preceded by the development of the social infrastructure in those regions. We have the potential to build into this process a high degree of safety. [end recording]

Yeltsin Edict Steps Up Activity on Chemical Disarmament

LD2703121095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1217 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—The Russian president's decree "On preparation of the Russian Federation for fulfilling international obligations in the field of chemical disarmament" signed last Saturday is designed to upgrade activity of all departments engaged in preparations for the elimination of chemical weapons in compliance with the international convention banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and mandating their elimination, according to deputy chief of the Russian radiation, chemical and biological defence troop, Major-General Viktor Kholstov.

Russia in recent years did not adopt on a high state level a single document comparable to this presidential decree, Kholstov said in an exclusive interview with the ITAR-TASS today. The decree specifies the main functions of all ministries and departments relating to the elimination of the chemical weapons.

According to Kholstov, the definition of the leading principles, in conformity with which preparations and elimination of the chemical stockpiles will be carried on, is among the most important provisions formulated in the decree. The decree provides for the protection of the interests of people and the environment, and the creation of the necessary infrastructure in the locations where the chemical weapon elimination capacities are situated. According to Kholstov, the decree is of great significance for Russia's regions.

A special interdepartmental commission is being set up for the first time in Russia to accomplish the tasks set in the decree. The commission will coordinate all work to prepare the Russian Federation for the fulfilment of its international commitments under the agreements on chemical disarmament. This decision will not only accelerate the drafting of plans for the elimination of the chemical weapons but it will also streamline interaction between the military and the industrialists on the one hand and the administration of Russian regions on the other, he said.

"Our country has never used combat poisonous substances," general said. "It was the first to sign and then ratify the 1929 Geneva protocol banning chemical weapons. Russia has always regarded the protocol as a deterrent. It is not accidental that the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute said in a statement back in 1971 that "the Russians never were the initiators of the development of chemical weapons or champions of the chemical arms race."

"For these reasons we regard the elimination of chemical weapons as a lawful process in need of financing and effective organisation at the state level", Viktor Kholstov said.

Biography of New CBW Committee Chairman

LD2503105095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1041 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 25 ITAR-TASS—A decree by Russian President Boris Yeltsin today appointed Pavel Syutkin chairman of the presidential committee for chemical and biological weapon [CBW] convention affairs, ITAR-TASS was told today in the presidential press service.

Syutkin, 53, was born in Sverdlovsk. He graduated from the Kuban Medical Institute in 1965. Syutkin retired from the Russian Army in the rank of colonel of medical service.

Syutkin served in 1965-1983 in anti-epidemic units of the Soviet Armed Forces and in the Central Military Medical Department of the Defence Ministry.

In 1983-1992, Syutkin worked in the Soviet government's apparatus. He was deputy chairman of the Committee for Chemical and Biological Weapon Convention Affairs under the Russian president in 1992-94, and was acting chairman of the committee since June 1994.

Yeltsin Leaves on Holiday From Kazan Railway Station

LD2703053595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0520 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 Mar—Russian President Boris Yeltsin left on holiday by train from Kazan station this morning. This is the first time that a head of the Russian state has left on a trip around the country by rail and not by airplane.

Before he set off by train, the Russian president was acquainted with how the reconstruction of Kazan railway station was proceeding and inspected a new Russian electric train manufactured by the Demikhovskiy works near Moscow.

Yeltsin 'Satisfied' With Chernomyrdin Report to Government

LD2703082095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0731 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Ivantsov]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—"I am satisfied with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's report to the recent extended meeting of the government," Russian President Boris Yeltsin told journalists at the Kazanskiy railway terminal in Moscow before leaving for vacation.

"Although the gathering reminded me of a meeting of activists of the (Soviet Communist) party and economic management, nonetheless, we had an important and serious discussion of things at it," the president said. He stressed that the meeting focussed on ways which the government was to use to reach the objectives set forth in the president's annual message to the Federal Assembly.

According to the president, some of the speeches were not quite good. He said those were speeches focusing not on nation-wide problems but on the minor difficulties faced by the speakers themselves.

President Yeltsin at the same time pointed out that some of the speakers aired a number of interesting proposals which should be included in the programme of medium-term reforms as soon as possible, particularly since it was in the focus of attention of the recent conference.

Shumeyko Defends Regions at Government Session

LD2403160495 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0749 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Speech by Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko at an expanded Russian Government session in the Kremlin—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] In my short speech, I would like to concentrate on the elements in the proposed program which I consider the most important and the most critical. Viktor Stepanovich [Chernomyrdin], quite justifiably, criticized the regions in his speech, giving specific examples. I will now try—on behalf of the regions—to criticize the federal power bodies, with regard to the program. It is natural that the government's economic, financial, and budgetary policy should fully encompass the interests and the situations of all of the regions and all of the component parts of the Russian Federation. Therefore, for me, as the chairman of the Federation Council—and our chamber is often called the chamber of the regions—the main thing is the extent to which the principles of budgetary federalism as set out in the current Constitution are embodied in the program presented.

I think, respected colleagues, that you will agree with me that budgetary federalism today is not only and not just a way of dividing budgetary and taxation powers between the federal and local power bodies. The main point is that we are now discussing the mechanism for financial exchange within the federation. Economists say that such financial exchange should allow us to revive production throughout Russia as a whole and in each component part of the federation individually. The move toward a general strategic, economic... [pauses] a strategic reduction in the economic role of the state should be changed now by taking into account the growing financial and economic differences among Russia's regions, under the influence of the growing inequalities of the initial development of the market.

We are convinced in the Federation Council, and this was confirmed recently during two days of sharp debate on the 1995 budget, that these differences, the lack of equality between the regions, can only be relieved now by aid from the federal center. In our view, the current problems of the different branches of industry—and Viktor Stepanovich spoke about the problems in the different branches of industry in economic policy—these problems are of secondary importance in comparison with the regional and territorial problems. However, less attention was devoted to regional problems in the program considered today than we would like, with the exception, perhaps of the budget federalism.

I would like to stress in particular that if regional policy and the appropriate funds for the state to support the regions are pushed to one side, then we are not moving toward federalism but toward the disintegration of a united Russian economy. This absolutely must not be allowed to happen. We need to do our best to strengthen the economic basis and the development of the federative basis of the Russian state.

On the other hand, the component parts of Russia are categorically against the buck being passed to them with regard to many federal expenses—for example, for cultural and public facilities—without the appropriate budgetary and taxation powers being granted to them.

In federal budgetary policy, the problem of the budget deficit is not the most significant one although it is a painful problem for the regions at the moment. It is the problem of the interaction between the federal budget and the budgetary systems of all of the component parts of the federation and the fact that the component parts do not have a tax base which is of the most significance. The worst policy here is the policy where the component parts clash with one another as happened when transfer funds were reallocated for 1995.

Thus Anatoliy Stepanovich [Tyazholov], the respected head of the Moscow Region administration, is entered in the budget as a region requiring special help, an especially needy region when there are republics like Dagestan which are thought to be flourishing. This was not the fault of the government or individual leaders. The system itself, the way calculations are made, led to Moscow Region being classified as especially needy and Dagestan not. That is why we are saying that this policy which leads to clashes between the component parts is very harmful; when we discussed the budget, all the emotional remarks were about this.

When the budget, instead of being planned by regions ...[pauses] This is not the government's fault. When a list

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appears of which hospital should be built in which reason—even today this is not the responsibility of the federal authorities. Each component part of the federation knows which hospital it should build where. Of course, deputies in the State Duma could also be criticized here. While they were discussing the budget with the government and finding their so-called compromises, a whole list of specific facilities appeared. All of this is obsolete, we should have left it behind long ago.

The process of equaling out the budgetary provision of residents of the various regions can only be carried out as a conscious task on the basis of a substantial reallocation of budget resources from some component parts of the federation to others, via the federal budget and federal nonbudgetary funds.

We think that a temporary lack of symmetry between budgetary powers is permissible if this is done publicly, with the agreement of the Federal Assembly and has a basis in authority.

In my view, it is wrong today to claim—and such an idea is contained in the program under discussion if you read it carefully—that the federal budget has become the main, if not the only, source of inflation. Not more than 50 percent of the resources of the consolidated budget are concentrated in the federal budget, and one can no longer dismiss the budget expenditure of the components of the Russian Federation, as well as nonbudget funds. I think that cost inflation is also being underestimated, as well as the growth of price monopolization in wholesale and retail trading in the context of a dwindling supply of goods, especially in Russia's northern and eastern regions, and of the financial factors of inflation that reflect the narrowness of attractive areas for the investment of accumulated money, apart from accumulations of dollar assets. There is no consideration yet of the inflationary factors generated by privatization and removal from state control. Material assets and shares are sold, and, putting it crudely, are eaten up. They are eaten up and give rise to another price rise.

In order to stimulate an economic upsurge, in the program reliance is placed on private investment. That is correct, in our view. Yet no consideration is given to the question of motivation of the accumulation of private capital in the specific conditions of the Russian regions, in the specific conditions of our Russian heartland, as it is called. If there is no interest, not just in monetary accumulation, but also in the accumulation of real capital,the main production funds and working capital, then all monetary capital and all free, (?monetary) resources will continue to move out of the production sphere, just as they are today. In the near future, there may be no substantial revival of the investment market, the means of production, and demand for precisely the means of production rather than securities.

Incidentally, speaking of the securities market, such aspects of the interests of the components of the Russian Federation are also necessary, after all. As the program indicates, the projected large-scale sale of federal state securities on the domestic market will inevitably come up against the increasing interest of the components of the federation in their own security issues, as well as the desire to issue regional loans. The attractiveness of both federal and regional securities may come into conflict and suffer. The monetary systems may also be destabilized, and the budgets will not receive the expected funds.

A similar effect may also be produced by an uncoordinated forced sell-off of the share portfolios that are federally owned and also owned by the components of the federation. Here again, instead of an investment boom, the securities market may be overloaded, the centers of the components of the federation will again come into conflict, and they will sustain losses instead of making profits. In our view, these factors must be identified immediately and agreed on precisely with each component of the federation so that there is a region-wide problem... [pauses] a common program.

The problem of the privatization of plots of land, widely known as land privatization for the sake of simplicity—buying and selling—may come to be a further controversial factor—it's constantly discussed in our Federation Council—and develop into a clash between the interests of federal-wide and regional economic policy. On the one hand, the free or subsidized taking on of plots of land from state ownership, the property of enterprises and private individuals, may lead to the budget system's losing revenue from lease payments and ground rent. But what is more substantial is the fact that the regional land market, if it goes on developing for a while as it is developing, will divert to itself not just bank and foreign capital, but also the uncommitted funds of enterprises and the population—which will also undermine the development of the investment market and actual production in the productive sphere.

One must, thus, take into account the consequences of land privatization in the dynamics and the feedback system, and not turn aside—I am not afraid of that—from rigid, precise and rigid, state regulation of land relations. Today it is necessary to derive maximum benefit from the fact that a considerable proportion of the land is still in the hands of the state, and to direct the process precisely toward the development of our production, toward the development and support of our commodity producers.

Esteemed Viktor Stepanovich, esteemed members of the government: These brief factors and many other issues are constantly under discussion in the Federation Council, where, as I have said already, the interests of all components, all the components, all the regions of Russia are represented. For that reason, we propose to work in close contact with the government within the competence of our chamber and to try to see that the program that has been submitted develops and serves the interests of the whole of our Russia and the interests of each region and of the whole of our people. Thank you.

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Filatov, Shakhray Speak at Federalism Conference

LD2503120995 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 95

[From the 'Vesti' newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] A conference devoted to the delimitation of powers between federal and local bodies of state power is taking place in the State Service academy.

Opening the conference Sergey Filatov expressed the opinion that the best state structure for Russia was a constitutional federation. Sergey Shakhray, deputy chairman of the government, who delivered the main report, stressed that unlike other countries where federations had been formed from the bottom upwards, the opposite process is taking place in Russia; a formerly unitarian state is gradually turning into a federal one. Shakhray pointed out the necessity of unifying the status of republics, krays and oblasts and improving the federal treaty.

The legislation of a number of republics—in particular Tuva and Sakha—still contradicts the constitution of the Russian Federation in some cases in providing for secession from Russia. As a model for the delimitation of powers between the center and the components of the federation Sergey Shakhray cited the relations which are being formed with Tatarstan.

Vasiliy Likhachev, vice president of Tatarstan, told in more detail about this experience. Ramazan Abdulatipov, deputy chairman of the Federation Council, stressed that on the whole the numerically small people had found their niche in the new Russian state.

Party Expels Rutskoy; 'Duma-96' States Policy Goals

MK2503130095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 25 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Gleb Cherkasov in the "Party Life" column: "Duma-96 Will Engage in Professionalizing Russian Politics. An RSDPP Congress Has Expelled Aleksandr Rutskoy and His Allies From the Party"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic People's Party [RSDPP] expelled its Chairman Aleksandr Rutskoy and a group of his supporters from party ranks. Congress delegates deemed it necessary to abolish the post of party chairman altogether.

The RSDPP Third Congress was attended by 70 delegates from 46 regional organizations. Mr. Lipitskiy stated that approximately 20 branches supported the former party chairman, and expressed his utmost regret over the position by party divisions in Volgograd and Lipetsk Oblasts. Vasiliy Lipitskiy noted that several primary cells have not as yet made up their mind about their further fate. Curiously, the split within the RSDPP has a clear geographical pattern: Rutskoy has been backed by divisions from Russia's south regions while Lipitskiy has been supported in Siberia and the northwest.

It will be recalled that in early February Rutskoy finally disagreed with the majority of the RSDPP board, led by Vasiliy Lipitskiy, on the party's future: Aleksandr Rutskoy believed that the RSDPP should merge with the social-patriotic movement State [Derzhava], while Lipitskiy insisted that the party should associate with the Russian Social-Democratic Union.

In another development yesterday, the "public-political movement Duma-96" held its constituent congress. The new organization's proclaimed goal is to "pool the efforts by association members in selecting, preparing, and nominating professional specialists to future representative and executive power bodies and to the Russian presidency" as well as to "create professionally trained social strata to participate in state building and in administering political, economic, and cultural processes in Russia." The public association is led by Anatoliy Gordeyev, a newcomer to big-time politics. In the State Duma, Duma-96 is already represented by a deputies group of the same name which has not as yet raised the number of deputies necessary for registration. According to the organizing committee, 60 delegates from 48 Russian Federation subjects have taken part in the constituent congress.

Gordeyev said that Duma-96 is a "movement of professionals" who do not aim to bandy about loud political slogans. Vladimir Kvasov, former government chief of staff, now State Duma deputy, who is taking a most active part in the project, also stressed that the association "does not set forth big political goals." Subjecting government activity to sharp criticism (the Council of Ministers ex-chief of staff was not alone in this), Kvasov noted that "people who are now at the helm cannot correct the situation" in the national economy.

The Duma-96 association has, furthermore, announced its intention to promote a "greater professionalism of new State Duma deputies."

Rybkin Will Run for Presidency if Yeltsin Does Not

LD2403172895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1631 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—State Duma Chairman Ivan Rybkin is likely to run for Russian presidency in 1996 but only if Boris Yeltsin decides against running for the office again.

Rybkin said this in response to an ITAR-TASS question today.

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"In the event of the Russian president's decision to this effect I will consult colleagues, friends and like-minded people about what to do in this situation," he said.

Along with this, the Duma speaker stressed that he intended to run in the forthcoming parliamentary elections. But he has not yet made up his mind about whether he prefers to be nominated in a one-seat constituency or by an electoral bloc.

Rybkin said he had recently received a proposal for nomination from one-seat constituencies in the Voronezh and Volgograd regions.

Justice Ministry Annuls Registration of Aum Shinrikyo Branch

LD2403164395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Deputy Russian Justice Minister Vladimir Kuzmin announced that this ministry annulled the registration of the Moscow branch of the international Aum Shinrikyo religious group on Friday on the grounds that it presented "false documents".

In an interview with Interfax on Friday, Kuzmin said that in the wake of the Tokyo Metro toxic gas incident on Monday, the ministry questioned citizens represented as co-founders of Aum Shinrikyo in Moscow. The latter claimed to know nothing about the sect's earlier activities.

Kuzmin said the ministry does not have the power to ban the sect's activities in Russia, but can refuse to renew its registration if its alleged involvement in the recent terrorist attack is proved.

Meanwhile, the ministry has no grounds to demand the renewed registration of all religious groups operating in Russia, he said.

Media Issues

New Head of Russian Public TV Interviewed on Post

LD2503175195

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1840 GMT on 24 March carries the "Person of the Week" program, which features a 20-minute recorded studio interview with Sergey Blagovolin, newly appointed director general of Russian Public Television, by Yelena Sarkisyan. Reception is good.

Asked for his thoughts on the fact that he is occupying the post destined for Vladislav Listyev, who was assassinated on 1 March, Blagovolin says: "Of course I would not dream of comparing myself to Listyev, who really was a star of the television screen in the best sense of the word, in his sincerity and authenticity, but I will say this: If it should be the case that I am able to do something useful here, then it will not be the only case of a person from outside a given sphere turning out to be of considerable benefit to it. This is nothing unusual—it happens all the time both here in Russia and in other countries."

Sarkisyan then summarizes other posts held by Blagovolin: professor of economic studies, deputy director of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, president of the Institute of National Security and Strategic Research, member of the board of directors of London's International Institute of Strategic Studies, chairman of the political council of the Moscow organization of the Russia's Democratic Choice party and member of the Presidential Council. Asked which of these posts he will be surrendering, Blagovolin replies that he is leaving his Russia's Democratic Choice post and ceasing all party political work. He adds that he will retain his academic posts but on a less active basis. He continues: "I do not intend to leave the Presidential Council as I believe that it will be good for my work."

Blagovolin goes on to speak about the professionalism he anticipates from his new workforce and his aspiration to provide objective news coverage. He concludes by describing his hobbies, which include writing poetry.

Duma's Attempt To Control TV Viewed

954F1854A St. Petersburg SMENA in Russian 17 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Aleksey Serditov: "Fight for TV Moved to the Duma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The fight for the main lever of influencing public opinion—television—which is intensifying as the election campaign approaches, is entering a new phase. The decision adopted by the Duma on Wednesday, to draft a law on suspending Ostankino's conversion to joint-stock holding, means the parliament is now jumping into the fray.**

Actually, the deputies also had a choice of a more radical proposal—nationalization of television's Channel 1, proposed, naturally, by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Parliament members, however, supported the proposal submitted by Sergey Kalashnikov, chairman of the labor and social policy committee—also a Zhirinovskiy party member, by the way. In an interview with SMENA, however, Mr. Kalashnikov emphasized that his proposal is the initiative of the committee and not the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] faction.

Among the main arguments in favor of his proposal, Sergey Kalashnikov name the "haste, secrecy, and subterfuge in creating the Public Russian Television [PRT]", as well as encroachment on the interests of the state. The deputy also is unhappy about "social topics" being displaced from Channel 1, which indirectly confirms the political underpinnings of the Duma decision. At the same time, Sergey Kalashnikov does not believe it

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necessarily to completely rule out creation of a joint-stock PRT, proposing only a temporary pause.

The deputies' motivation was enunciated in more specific terms in an interview with a SMENA correspondent of one of the Duma's deputy speakers, Gennadiy Seleznev. "The meaning of public television is to represent the entire political spectrum of the society. The board of trustees of the new television, however, consists of only Russia's Choice people."

And indeed, among PRT stockholders, in additional to Gazprom and LogoVAZ concerns, the Imperial and Menatep banks, and others, quite a prominent role is played by the National Credit bank, whose chairman is Oleg Boyko—until recently chairman of the Russia's Choice's executive committee. Oleg Boyko's withdrawal from a leading role in Russia's Choice is attributed to his disagreement with Yegor Gaydar's "anti-president" line. There are reports that Stability—a new pro-government group that already has attracted 40 deputies—is working closely with the PRT stockholders team. Thus, the fight between politicized capital and ambitious Duma politicians is beginning right within Duma walls.

Nuclear, Space Issues

Nuclear Safety Levels Considered Inadequate

LD2503171595 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0900 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The state of nuclear safety in Russia cannot be said to be satisfactory. Five significant incidents and one accident take place at Russian nuclear power stations every year. These figures, Gosatomnadzor [State Supervision Agency for Atomic Power Capabilities] says, show the level of reliability and safety of Russian nuclear power engineering.

[Correspondent Yevgeniya Novikova] According to information from Gosatomnadzor, 126 failures occurred at Russia's nuclear power stations in 1994, but there were no accidents or fires. The most unreliable reactors were those of the Chernobyl type. Kola nuclear power station had the most incidents. Novovoronezh nuclear power station was in second place for number of incidents, and Balakovo was in third place. However, in 1994 no contamination of the environment was found to have occurred as a result of nuclear power station activities.

As of 1 January 1995, there had been 19 thefts of Uranium from enterprises belonging to Russia's ministry of Atomic Energy.

The storage space available for the navy's spent nuclear fuel is virtually exhausted. However, in the North and Pacific Ocean alone over 500 tonnes of nuclear fuels has accumulated. However, Goskomatomnadzor still does not have reliable information. According to Gosatomnadzor information, the majority of waste burial facilities for radioactive waste do not meet safety requirements. And this could lead to an ecological catastrophe, Gosatomnadzor considers.

Modified Strategic Missile To Launch Commercial Satellites

LD2703083[illegible]5 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0724 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—Russia is going to use a modified strategic missile to orbit three commercial satellites on Tuesday [28 March] thus making money to compensate for poor budget appropriations and saving on the destruction of strategic weapons liable for elimination, TASS learned from the press centre of the strategic missile forces.

The "Topol" strategic missile designed by Boris Lagutin and equipped with an additional booster is called the "Start" system and will blast off from the test site of the Russian strategic forces near the town of Mirniy in the northern Arkhangelsk region with three satellites onboard.

One of them is an Israeli satellite, the second is a joint Russian-Mexican craft, while the third one is completely Russian.

Experts of the Strategic Missile Forces told TASS that the "Start" programme is carried out exclusively in peaceful purposes and is aimed to promote research in the near-earth space.

They also said that they expect considerable profits from such commercial launches, however, did not disclose the expected receipts. Besides, the commercial use of strategic missiles which are to be decommissioned or eliminated according to disarmament treaties will help save considerable finances, according to the experts.

Text of Decree Requiring Resubmission of Ukraine Accords

MM2703111995 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 95 First Edition p 4

[Decree No. 604-1 GD of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma "In Connection with the Ukrainian Supreme Council's Decisions on the Crimea," dated Moscow, 22 March 1995 and signed by I.P. Rybkin, chairman of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma decrees:

1. The Russian Federation Government is to be required to resubmit to the State Duma the entire package of agreements with Ukraine signed during February-March 1995.

2. O.N. Soskovets, leader of the Russian Federation delegation at the talks with Ukraine, is to be invited to the State Duma session 24 March 1995 to give information on the course of the talks and to answer questions from State Duma deputies.

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3. The State Duma Committee on CIS Affairs and Links with Compatriots and the State Duma Committee on Legislation and Judicial-Legal Reform, jointly with the State Duma Committee on the Budget, Taxes, Banks, and Finances, are to be entrusted with preparing and submitting to the State Duma the draft federal law "On the Procedure for Restructuring Debts of Foreign States to the Russian Federation."

4. The Duma part of the Interparliamentary Commission on Russian-Ukrainian Cooperation and the State Duma Commission on the Black Sea Fleet are to be instructed to proceed, in the course of talks and consultations, from recognition of the city of Sevastopol, within the administrative-territorial boundaries of the city district as of December 1991, as the Black Sea Fleet's chief base.

5. The Russian Federation president is to be required to hold consultations with the Russian Federation Government and the Russian Federation Federal Assembly on questions concerning relations with Ukraine.

[Signed] I.P. Rybkin, chairman of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma. 22 March 1995.

Duma Proposes Yeltsin Hold Consultations on Crimea

LD2403135795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1250 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—Representatives of all Duma's factions, with the exception of the democratic "Russia's Choice", have sent the president a letter with a proposal to conduct urgent consultations with the government and the Federal Assembly on the issue of Russian-Ukrainian relations.

Lawmakers proposed the president to convene a consultative meeting on the issue under his chairmanship.

The letter stressed that "Duma's members were deeply concerned about the prospects of Russian-Ukrainian relations in connection with the decisions on the Crimean problem adopted by the Ukrainian parliament on March 17, and further actions of Ukrainian authorities which humiliate the will of the Crimean population and may destabilise the situation in a region that borders on Russia."

"We have every reason to maintain that the Ukrainian parliament has adopted these extraordinary decisions in a clearly unfriendly context for Russia", the letter stressed.

Moreover, Russian mps are concerned over the controversial responses of the Russian Government, the Foreign Ministry and Federal Assembly members to the Crimean events.

The most controversial reaction to these events was triggered by recent activities of the Russian delegation conducting talks in ukraine and headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets.

"The recent Russian-Ukrainian talks in Kiev on March 20-21 cannot be regarded successful both because of their unsuitable timing and results", the letter said.

Law on Taking Part in Peacekeeping Operations Approved

LD2403170395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The State Duma (the lower house of Russian parliament) on Friday overwhelmingly approved a new law on the country's participation in international peacekeeping operations. It is now pending endorsement by the Federation Council (upper house).

The president is vested with powers of decision making whether to send or recall Russian servicemen or civilians involved in international peacekeeping operations. But it is up to the upper house to determine questions such as the area of fighting, the task, the strength and the period of posting of a Russian peacekeeping contingent.

But any sending of troops to take part in combat operations is subject to an agreement with the U.N. Security Council or other international agreements signed by the Russian president or government in pursuance of an appropriate Council resolution. These are subject to approval by both houses of the Russian parliament.

The government is expected to present annual reports about the country's involvement in peacekeeping operations to the Federal Assembly.

State Duma Passes Law on Presidential Elections

LD2403165495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Russia's lower house, the State Duma, on Friday passed a law on the election of the Russian president, under which one needs to collect a minimum of 1.5 million signatures to be nominated as a candidate.

The law, passed by a vote of 284 (with a passage minimum of 226) versus one with one abstention, has gone into the upper house, the Federation Council, for approval.

The minimum of signatures to be required for nomination was set at 2 million in the original draft, but was cut to 1.5 million in the course of debates.

As the law was debated, a provision was also incorporated into it for the mandatory control of an electronic vote-counting system. An amendment to the same effect was passed by a separate vote to an earlier law on the election of the Duma.

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The Duma rejected a proposal by Viktor Sheynis from the house Yabloko group, who wished the turnout minimum for the returns of a presidential election to be considered valid to be brought down from 50 to 25 percent.

Duma Retains Previous Parliament Election System

LD2403113995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1108 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 24 TASS—The Russian State Duma decided to preserve the election system which was fixed by the Russian president for parliamentary polls in December 1993 when the current State Duma was elected and to keep the total number of deputies in the lower chamber at the previous 450 figure.

According to the law on elections passed under the third reading on Friday, lawmakers ruled that 225 members of the Duma are to be elected on the first-past-the-post basis, while the other 225 deputies are to qualify by party lists.

If a candidate from a political party or an election bloc wants to run by the first-past-the-post system, he needs to collect at least 200 thousand signatures in various parts of Russia and the number of signatures gathered in any republic or region cannot exceed seven per cent of the 200 thousand.

An independent candidate needs to collect at least one per cent of signatures of the total electorate in the constituency where he wants to run.

The upper chamber of the Russian parliament, the Federation Council, is not elected. It unites two representatives from each Russian region - the heads of the executive and legislative authority who are elected at local polls.

New Parliamentary Group Formed in State Duma

LD2403195995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—A new parliamentary group calling itself "Russia" and being "a conservative center" emerged in the Russian State Duma, the lower house of parliament, Friday. One of its organizers Igor Shichanin of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES) said the new group includes 35 members: 13 of them from the New Regional Policy faction, six from PRES, four from Russia's Choice, two Agrarians, one from the Democratic Party and nine Independents.

Under house regulations, a parliamentary group is expected to have at least 35 members to be registered.

Shichanin described the new group's members as "professionals winning seats in single-mandate constituencies" in the previous election.

He said the group was in support of consolidation of and constructive cooperation by all government branches and all political forces.

"We are supportive of compromise because the principle of all or nothing is no longer effective and may lead to an outbreak of gunshots in the streets", Shichanin said.

Members of the group will hold their first meeting and a news conference after coming back from their constituencies where they will work next week, he said. No leadership has yet been elected.

Duma Committee Chairman Accused of Scam

MM2403143695 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 95 pp 1, 2

[Report by Tatyana Khudakova: "Chairman of State Duma Committee Suspected of Forgery"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There are serious grounds for suspecting Sergey Kalashnikov, chairman of the State Duma Labor and Social Support Committee, of substituting documents with counterfeit ones and attempting to mislead deputies and the government, Mikhail Drel, leader of a Russian Federation Government Experts' Council working group, stated in an interview to IZVESTIYA.

The scandal began to flare up 17 March when the first hearing of the draft law on nonstate pension funds was to have taken place. It was then that it was discovered that positive conclusions made about the draft by the government and the Duma legal administration had been appended to a different text—to which substantive changes had been made.

The investigation carried out by members of the Experts' Council working group while the tracks were still fresh produced sensational results: The amended text had been kept in the utmost secrecy not only from the draft's authors (among others they include Duma deputies) but from all interested ministries and departments. What is more, Mikhail Drel claims that Kalashnikov himself devised the written amendments, and two to three persons whose names have not yet been established were involved in carrying out the changes.

The system proposed by Mr. Kalashnikov brilliantly obscures the whole way that money is used. Judge for yourselves.

Under the existing arrangement, when a citizen hands over his money to a fund, he is the owner not just of his deposits but of the return earned by his investment. He has the right to demand a statement at any moment for the pension account under his name. The fund itself, as a noncommercial organization, passes on the money to fund management companies for investment in the least

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risky projects and vigilantly follows the investments' progress, inasmuch as it only "lives" on previously agreed interest from earned income.

Sergey Vyacheslavovich put forward another scheme. Two absolutely new structures are created. First of all there is the State Association of Nonstate Pension Funds (even the Justice Ministry could not explain what this was), in which 51 percent of the votes (in a voluntary association?—T. Kh.) go to the State Inspectorate for Nonstate Pension Funds, which is at present headed by Yuriy Volkov.

The second structure is called the Reserve Fund. But one attractive principle unites both the first and the second organizations: All pension funds must perforce transfer a total of 70 percent of money collected to them. Including 50 percent for the mandatory procurement of state securities and the financing of investment projects backed up by state guarantees, and 20 percent for deposit in the Reserve Fund, which is again under state management.

The two named structures manage the sum total of the money. How? The following system is outlined. The citizen gives his money to a nonstate pension fund; the fund passes it on to the Reserve Fund's board; the Reserve Fund redirects it to the State Association of Nonstate Pension Funds; the association entrusts it at its discretion to those funds belonging to the state association which it takes a liking to; and the selected fund hands over the money to fund management companies. In other words "we sit back while the money does the rounds;" under these circumstances a brigade of super detectives would not be able to find the hole into which the money had disappeared, let alone the average pensioner.

It is probably for this reason that Mr. Kalashnikov kept his amendments in the strictest secrecy. They are hardly likely to have appealed to the deputies, who would immediately have caught on to what an absolute scam this was. The government would also not want to appear a swindler in the eyes of the people, because the total amount of nonstate pension fund shares now already amounts to 600-700 billion rubles, and how much will they amount to in the future?

Gennadiy Khizha, chairman of the Russian Federation Government Expert's Council, sent the government a letter in which he evaluated the secret innovations in the draft law as follows: "In essence the additions change the structure of the relationship between the nonstate pension funds and the state, and in the final analysis it is the state which will have to bear responsibility for all the unfulfilled obligations vis-a-vis the nonstate pension fund members (future pensioners), as well as for the low profitability of the investment of pension shares. In these circumstances, entrepreneurs lose all motivation to create nonstate pension funds and make them operate successfully, as they will have to hand over 70 percent of pension shares to the government.

What was guiding Sergey Kalashnikov when he made the amendments to the draft law? Mikhail Drel thinks that there may be at least two reasons for this. The first was the creation of a "fall-back position" for himself (the post of Reserve Fund chairman) in case Kalashnikov is not elected to the Duma at the next elections. The second was his wish to have access to money for the election campaign.

But another question inevitably arises. What kind of procedures prevail in the Duma, and how is the monitoring of the passage of draft laws and the procedure for making amendments and additions organized if such a thing was possible?

Duma Overturns Yeltsin, Adopts Law on Protection of Judges

LD2203230395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1504 GMT 22 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 22 Mar—The federal law "On the State Protection of Judges and Officials of Law-Enforcement and Regulatory Bodies" was adopted for a second time by the State Duma today, taking account of the Russian president's remarks and proposals. The law, which had earlier been adopted by the chamber, was turned down by the head of state. The president's remarks and proposals on the document amounted mainly to the fact that the adoption of the law would require considerable additional budgetary funds at a time when the 1995 budget had already been approved by the State Duma.

In this connection it was decided to immediately put into operation those articles of the law not requiring additional funding. Then the articles of the law requiring little additional budgetary funding will be put into operation from 1 January 1996. Finally the articles of the law concerning the provision, if the need arise, of a new place of residence for judges and officials of law-enforcement and regulatory bodies and requiring considerable additional financing will be put into operation from 1 January 1997.

Regional Affairs

Yeltsin Meets Leaders of Russian Republics

LD2403192795 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent Vladimir Lenskiy] Boris Yeltsin went from the expanded government session to a meeting with leaders of Russia's republics. He therefore proposed to the presidents of the republics not to concentrate on economic issues but to discus problems of strengthening the federation. Today's meeting has a basically political character. Nikolay

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Fedorov, the leader of the Chuvash Republic, thinks that Boris Yeltsin simply wants to calm the leaders of the former autonomies.

[Begin Fedorov recording] The internal political situation is becoming very strained, not because of more mistakes but simply ahead of elections for the Federal Assembly and president of Russia. [end recording] [video shows Yeltsin meeting republican leaders]

[Lenskiy] One of the main topics of today's meeting was the economic restoration of Chechnya. Representatives of this republic took part in a meeting of this kind for the first time.

[Begin Yeltsin recording] Among us is Salambek Naimovich Khadzhiyev, the prime minister of the government of national revival of the Chechen Republic. [applause] [end recording]

[Lenskiy] The president promised Khadzhiyev the cooperation of the federal bodies of power and the constituent parts of the federation, whose leaders intended to touch on the problems of Chechnya's political structure.

[Begin Ingush President Aushev recording] How will this happen? Who will be chosen? I am certain that all those who are appointed will not be accepted by the people. Conditions therefore need to be created for the Chechen people to determine things themselves. [end recording]

[Lenskiy] The meeting of Russian leaders was held as always behind closed doors, but judging by the fact that Deputy Prime Minister Soskovets came to take part in the conversation, President Yeltsin was able to expect special attention to be paid to the economic aspect of Chechnya's restoration.

Yeltsin Meets Kaliningrad Oblast Head, Pledges Compensation

WS2703080695 Kaliningrad SVOBODNAYA ZONA in Russian 16 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by G. Valiyev from the Kaliningrad Oblast Administration Information Service: "Boris Yeltsin: 'Russia's President and Government Understand the Situation in the Oblast'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A planned meeting between Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and Kaliningrad Oblast Administration Head Yu. Matochkin was held yesterday morning. The president expressed his support for the movement toward establishing a free economic zone on the territory of Russia's western-most region during the meeting, which lasted over half an hour. Russian Prime Minister V. Chernomyrdin was instructed—through direct lines of communication—to imperatively compensate the oblast for losses in connection with a recent edict that abolished customs tax exemptions. The president tasked First Deputy Prime Minister A. Chubays and Security Council Secretary O. Lobov with introducing an amendment—providing for a mechanism to compensate for Kaliningrad's losses—into the draft law "On the Socioeconomic Development of Kaliningrad Oblast."

The gist of this compensatory mechanism is that everyone will pay customs duties and VAT. The amount of collected tax, however, will remain in the oblast and will be deposited in a special account. It was envisaged to compensate for customs duties on the delivery of imported accessories for production and construction needs. Losses for hard alcohol and luxury items will not be compensated. According to the president's promises, producers of goods will not lose at all. A proper balance between the protection of local producers and the delivery of imported goods will be achieved. These moves will enable the stepping up of the development of those local businesses that manufacture goods for export and goods that replace imported products.

Boris Nikolayevich asked the administration head to tell all the residents of Kaliningrad Oblast that the president and the government understand the situation in their region, are concerned with this situation, and will do everything possible to avert any economic and political disorder.

Kaliningrad Oblast Administration Head Yu. Matochkin, First Russian Deputy Prime Minister A. Chubays, Russian Deputy Finance Minister A. Vavilov, and A. Kazakov, chief of the Department for Territorial Management in the Russian President's Office, also discussed socioeconomic problems of this Russian enclave during their meeting.

As the oblast executive administration head reported over the telephone from Moscow, the oblast administration intends to—without changing its strategy—step up the implementation of its programs that were formulated before. Its primary objective is the development of the "Yantar" free economic zone and the open economy. Naturally, regarding the Moscow meetings, relevant changes will be introduced. As early as today, a group of Kaliningrad experts embarked on the development of a mechanism for compensating for the losses in our ministries and departments.

Luzhkov Says Dispute With Chernomyrdin Resolved

LD2103190795 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The conflict between the authorities of the federation and the capital has apparently been resolved finally today. At an opening ceremony for one of Moscow's new shops the city's mayor, Yuriy Luzhkov, said that at his meeting with Premier Chernomyrdin they had managed to agree on all the basic causes of their dispute. Thanks to Luzhkov's efforts Moscow's economic and financial problems have now been transferred to the state. In the near future, after work by the

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ministries of the economy and finance, the city will begin to receive federal support from the state budget. It is not out of the question that the experienced and thrifty Luzhkov announced his possible resignation with this far from political aim in mind.

[Begin Luzhkov recording] Viktor Stepanovich, it seems to me, I can even say that I am sure, understood those reasons, those causes which made us make such sharp statements. [end recording]

Besides, the main protagonists in the conflict—dismissed Moscow procurator Vladimir Ponomarev and the dismissed head of the Internal Affairs Main Directorate, Gennadiy Pankratov—have moved to the background. Yuriy Luzhkov was certain that the court would reinstate them to their posts but this no longer has decisive significance.

[Begin Luzhkov recording] The labor code was fundamentally broken and Ponomarev will be reinstated. I think that Ponomarev will not want to work with such a prosecutor-general any more. I think that Pankratov too will be reinstated. After their reinstatement, each of these leaders must take their decisions and then you will see. [end recording]

The greatest problem for Moscow's mayor today was apparently the level of prices in Moscow's shops. He also intends to resolve this but by purely economic not political means.

Incidentally the POSTFACTUM agency has learned that Moscow mayor Luzhkov's suit against Interior Minister Viktor Yerin will be heard on 4 April. The case to be argued before the Supreme Court is that the decision to dismiss Moscow Internal Affairs Main Directorate head Pankratov is invalid.

A new post has been offered to Moscow's former prosecutor, Ponomarev. The Federation Council's Committee for the Budget recommended Ponomarev for the post of the chamber's auditor.

Filatov Arrives on Visit to Karachay-Cherkessia

MM2203115195 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 22 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Pavel Anokhin under the "Visits" rubric: "Karachay-Cherkessia Will Be Offered a Structure of Organs of Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sergey Filatov, leader of the Russian Presidential Staff, arrived in Cherkessk, capital of the Karachay-Cherkess Republic, yesterday.

In the opinion of observers, this visit is taking place against the backdrop of the strengthening of the Federation. The staff's press service announced that the trip corresponds to scheduled events planned by the Conciliation Commission on Karachay- Cherkessia, led by Sergey Filatov. During his meetings with representatives of the local authorities and political forces they will discuss versions of the laws on the structure of the republic's state organs and on elections to its legislative organ. According to Russian presidential edict they should be adopted by 1 April 1995. As far as ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI is aware, Karachay-Cherkessia will be offered a model whereby the republic's supreme executive organ will be the State Council and its supreme representative organ will be the People's Assembly.

Chairs Karachayevo-Cherkessiya Reconciliation

LD2203175295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1652 GMT 22 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cherkessk, Mar 22 (INTERFAX)—The Reconciliatory Commission on Karachayevo-Cherkessiya, headed by Sergey Filatov, completed its meeting in Cherkessk with the participation of the Karachayevo-Cherkessiya government, national movements, public organizations and political parties today.

Kremlin Chief of Staff Sergei Filatov told a press conference, after the commission's meeting, that the Reconciliatory Commission had put forward a three-stage plan for resolving the constitutional crisis in Karachayevo-Cherkessiya.

The first stage provides for adopting laws on elections and a referendum in Karachayevo-Cherkessiya. The laws have already been drafted by the Reconciliatory Commission. They are expected to be adopted by the Karachayevo-Cherkessiya People's Assembly on March 23.

The second stage is for holding parliamentary elections in the republic, planned for mid-May 1995, so that the parliament be formed by June 1, in keeping with the Russian president's decree on the situation in Karachayevo- Cherkessiya.

The third stage provides for drafting the constitution of Karachayevo-Cherkessiya and adopting a law on the state power structure in the republic.

Filatov said the Reconciliatory Commission believed that the following structure would be the most convenient for Karachayevo- Cherkessiya: the parliament, elected by nation-wide voting, the head of republic elected by direct voting, the council of ministers formed by the head of republic and parliament and an independent judicial system. Filatov said the Russian president would have to interfere into the situation in the republic once again if the conflict's settlement was delayed.

The Reconciliatory Commission will return to Moscow from Cherkessk today.

Murmansk Mayor Restricts Media Access

954F1738A Murmansk POLYARNAYA PRAVDA in Russian 10 Feb 95 p 1

[Article by Ye. Denisenko: "The Mayor Said: 'Silence!'"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] The president of Russia has been trying for quite a while to resolve the delicate problem of "taming" the obdurate mass media. Murmansk Mayor O.P. Naydenov, however, knows the secret of success. This secret was revealed in Directive No. 36, dated 30 January of this year, and boils down to artful application of the "outflanking maneuver." You cannot get rid of the annoying "scribblers?" Let them be. You can "discipline" your subordinates instead. From now on the only persons authorized to talk to the media are Oleg Petrovich himself, his deputies, the city administration's administrator of affairs, and the information department chief. All other officials must first obtain a "go-ahead" from the administration head or his deputies. And "other officials" include far from small fry: the chiefs of the city education and health care departments, and so on—people who are ostensibly supposed to be competent and capable of being responsible for what they say.

Actually, the "officials" seem to be very happy that this responsibility has been taken off their shoulders: Over the past few days, on numerous occasions in response to our most banal questions we have been told where to go. To Naydenov's deputies. Which is where we learned of Directive No. 36—the city administration, considering this innovation a "family" affair, did not notify journalists of the issuance of this document. At the press' demand, a briefing was held, however. Interestingly, the motives that guided the mayor were reiterated on his behalf by N.S. Mikhaylova, city administrator of affairs. She apologized for the unethical behavior of the department chiefs and promised that from now on at the very first call from a journalist an "official" will drop whatever he is doing and do everything in his power to get Naydenov's permission to communicate with the press. Moreover, in Natalya Stepanovna's opinion, "this directive provides that" a department chief "should sense (?) whether or not he needs permission."

Let us leave aside the journalist "kitchen" and turn to the Russian Federation law on the mass media. Article 39, on which this directive is allegedly based, obliges top officials and their deputies to provide information but in no way prohibits their subordinates to talk to these "monsters" armed with tape recorders. It appears this smells of a potential hearing in the Judiciary Chamber for Information Disputes under the Russian Federation president.

Actually, in the end Natalya Stepanovna promised to inform the mayor of all journalists' objections and try to convince him to either revoke the directive or change its form. Alas, we cannot agree to the proposed "let us consider the document never existed"—who knows what else one may expect of such an unpredictable city administration.

Norilsk Mayor Says It Will Remain Part of Krasnoyarsk Kray

MK2303135095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 23 Mar 95 p 3

[Unattributed report in the "Provincial Chronicle" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] Norilsk—The situation in the city following the dismissal of Mayor Vasiliy Tkachev, who demanded that Norilsk be transferred under the jurisdiction of Taymyr Autonomous Okrug or be placed directly under Moscow's jurisdiction, remains stable. However, an initiative group, which was created in the city, has sent letters to the Russian Federation president and leaders of the State Duma and the Federation Council, demanding to withdraw from the [Krasnoyarsk] kray. According to new Mayor Anatoliy Popov, such appeals will hardly find a mass response among residents of the North. Norilsk is closely linked with Krasnoyarsk, from where supplies to the whole city are delivered down the Yenisey.

Polls Leave Tatarstan 'No Opposition'; Swindles Claimed

MM2103112895 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Boris Bronshteyn: "Do Voting Papers Disappear at Midnight?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazan—The nomenklatura has won a resounding victory in the elections to the Tatarstan State Council.

The success of the candidates in power was easily predictable, but it surpassed all expectations. After the first round of voting 42 of the 49 people on the list of deputies elected to administrative-territorial districts were heads of city and rayon administrations. The second round brought equally impressive results.

It seems that there will be no opposition at all in the new parliament to the republic's present leadership. According to the preliminary figures, only one of the 18 candidates from the Tatar National Party "Ittifak" got through. One person with the apt name of Oskolok [fragment] has been elected from the "Equality and Law" democratic bloc, which fielded 39 candidates. The Communist Party of Tatarstan, which had 46 nominees and only won three seats, suffered a severe defeat. However, this result by no means indicates the weakness of the Communists' positions in the republic. It is just that the former Communists who have been in power in Tatarstan continuously proved far more experienced at political campaigning.

The means and methods used during this campaign will be discussed for a long time to come during press conferences and in court by the losers—they have at their disposal dozens of documents and statements regarding all manner of swindles in favor of the so- called party in power.

"I have no comments to make regarding the course of the elections between 0700 and 2100 hours, but the elections do not end there," Valentin Lednev, leader of the State Duma group of observers, told journalists.

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State Duma deputies present during the second round were struck by the complete secrecy and lack of glasnost when the votes were being counted and the results summed up. Moscow's envoys were simply not admitted to the district electoral commissions; police duty officers said that this was the first time that they had seen Duma ID's and that they meant nothing to them. However, the ID's of local parliamentarians with which the police were familiar did not work either. Thus, Ildus Salakhov, a member of the Tatarstan Supreme Council Presidium (whose authority had not yet expired on election day), was not admitted to the building where the votes were being counted either. At 2330 hours Salakhov hunted out the republic's Internal Affairs Minister Iskander Galimov, but his appeal to the minister bore no fruit. Salakhov did not lose hope and at midnight asked Tatarstan Vice Premier Sergey Kirillov, who is responsible for the work of the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], for help.

"We spent two and a half hours with him trying to resolve this problem," Ildus Salakhov said. "The vice premier telephoned his subordinates, but at 0230 hours I realized that I would not be allowed into the building...."

Wouldn't you just know it! Yet even the recently-published Kazan telephone directory starts by saying that Tatarstan is a Democratic republic. It is sad, but the development of democratic processes in the republic should hardly be expected with the formation of a blatantly nomenklatura-based organ of people's power.

Yeltsin's Yaroslavl Oblast Representative Released

MM1603145995 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 95 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report under "Official" rubric]

[FBIS Translated Text] By edict of B.N. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Gennadyevich Varukhin has been released from the post of the Russian president's official representative in Yaroslavl Oblast at his own request.

Metallurgical Plant Disaster in Taganrog Kills 13

MK2403133095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Kirill Dybskiy under the "Disasters" rubric: "Disaster in Taganrog Claims 13 Lives"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Thirteen people died at Taganrog Metallurgical Combine as a result of a tragic accident yesterday. According to information from the crisis situations management center of the Russian Federation Ministry of Emergency Situations, four bays of roofing fell in the combine's pipe-rolling shop at 1348 Moscow time.

At that moment (according to the shop superintendent's lists) 30 people were present on the premises. Arriving on the scene, rescue teams of the Regional Center of the Emergency Situations Ministry extracted 13 dead from under debris. Fourteen workers were urgently hospitalized. Medics assess their state as "extremely serious." Two people are still on the missing list. At the time this issue went to press, work to sift through the debris continued. Teams of rescuers, medics, the civil defense staff, and local administration are working on the scene. According to preliminary findings, the tragedy was caused by the builders' technological errors—"an overloading of the concrete structural members." A probe has been launched.

Reportage, Commentary on Conflict in Chechnya

Dudayev Regime Allegedly Suborned Press

MM2203104695 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Mar 95 First Edition p 2

[Report by Yevgeniy Skukin: "Why Did They Keep Silent? An Answer to This Question Would Make It Possible To Identify the Causes of the Conflict in Chechnya"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A theory of the Dudayev regime's not unsuccessful influence on the formation of pro-Chechen public opinion has been advanced by Stanislav Govorukhin, chairman of the State Duma Commission for Investigating the Causes and Circumstances of the Outbreak of the Crisis Situation in the Chechen Republic.

"It was necessary a good three years ago to declare to the whole world that human rights were being blatantly violated in Chechnya," he said. "Sergey Adamovich Kovalev and I have met in the commission twice. On the last occasion I asked him the question: Do you know about the violation of human rights over the three years of Dudayev's rule? He said that he did not know. This statement looks very strange, especially since I have just read a report by Cossack Hetman Sharkov, who says that in 1991 he personally passed on to Kovalev documents and video materials on genocide in Chechnya.

The press did not trumpet this fact at the time either. Just as nowadays, incidentally, it far from always trumpets the fact that the rights of the Russian-speaking population are being violated in the former union republics.

The commission chairman read out to deputies a report from Geliskhanov, chief of the state security department, delivered to Dudayev in January of this year: "I report that, according to your permission, $1.5 million were spent by the state security department in December 1994 on the payment of journalists. Recently the Russian authorities have taken steps to facilitate the work of Russian and foreign journalists, which has made their

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use for our purposes significantly more difficult. In this respect I ask you to issue a directive on the allocation of an additional $1 million."

According to S. Govorukhin, the most difficult and dangerous part of the investigation is establishing the collaboration of Russian commercial firms and banks with Chechen commercial firms and banks. The matter also involves counterfeit advice notes, the illegal exchange of old money, and trading in arms and oil. All these circumstances will be examined by the commission, but investigating them is the affair of the state organs.

Dudayev's Troops Move Headquarters From Shali

LD2303163295 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1200 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to news agencies, this morning the military command of Dudayev's detachments moved their headquarters from the town of Shali, which is still under Russian troops' attack. The new whereabouts of the Chechen detachments' headquarters is as yet unknown.

Meanwhile, nearly all civilians have left Shali because the town has been heavily shelled.

Soldiers' Mothers Arrested in Nazran

LD2303164795 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1300 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, a group of soldiers' mothers taking part in a peace march arrived at the presidential palace in Nazran. The group was detained by Russian OMON [special police units] forces and moved to the town of Beslan, where the participants were beaten up, the CHECHENPRESS news agency reports.

Further Details on Capture of Argun

LD2303172095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1617 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 23 Mar—Citing a telephoned message from Colonel General Anatoliy Kulikov, commander of the Combined Group of Federal Forces in Chechnya, Oleg Soskovets, first deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Government, said that federal troops took the town of Argun intact at 1700 [1400 GMT] today.

Meanwhile, information received by ITAR-TASS from the Public Relations Center of the Russian Interior Ministry, which also cites Kulikov's report, says that interior troops units and back-up forces from Russian Interior Ministry agencies seized a large quantity of armor, weapons, and ammunition; fighters were captured. The troops' casualties were one dead and nine wounded. Checkpoints and military districts are now being set up in the town.

Troops To Liberate Shali, Gudermes 'Next Week'

LD2403164495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOZDOK, (North Ossetia)—Federal troops in Chechnya will continue their drive southwards and eastwards against groups of bandits there.

A well-placed military source in Mozdok reported to Interfax on Friday, Russian troops are to start sealing off Shali and Gudermes early next week. Militant strongholds close to the towns are being reconnoitered.

The source revealed that just as with Argun, operations to liberate Shali and Gudermes from Dudayev militants would be carried out by army and Interior Ministry forces with ground and airborne troops to surround the towns and police units to comb residential areas.

Commenting on the Argun operation, the military noted that the action had taken only 24 hours to complete, instead of the planned two days. "Under Russian army strikes, on the night of March 23, illegal armed units had to retreat, although they had built lots of defensive engineering installations. As the militants were blocked in Argun, they were unable to break the siege," the source reported.

Kvashnin: Argun Surrender 'Turning Point'

LD2403164995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STAVROPOL, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The surrender of Argun by the Dudayev supporters marked a turning point in the armed conflict in Chechnya, said Commander of the North Caucasian Military District Colonel-General Anatoliy Kvashnin. He told the leaders of the Stavropol territorial administration on Friday that the establishment of control over Argun by the federal troops was notable "not so much for a large amount of captured combat equipment, but or the fact that the city was seized without any assault."

Kvashnin said that the seizure of Argun points to low morale among the Dudayev supporters, which can also be judged from the massive surrender of the Dudayev militants to the federal troops.

Speaking about the development of the situation in Chechnya, Kvashnin expressed the opinion that "all major pockets of resistance will be suppressed within a couple of weeks."

He said that the south-eastern direction will become the main direction of the federal troops' operations, so they can shield Dagestan from the illegal armed groups' attempts to penetrate into it.

On Friday Kvashnin flew out from Stavropol to Chechnya.

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Chechen Radio Station Set Up in Krakow

LD2403140195

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 24 March carries a report by IZVESTIYA Leonid Kornilov from Krakow. Kornilov reports that local authorities have allowed a Chechen radio station, "Svobodnyy Kavkaz," (Free Caucasus), to set up its base there. A representative of a Chechen information center, which was established in Krakow on 13 January, announced that the radio station may go on the air this year. Programs will be broadcast on mediumwave and shortwave in both the Russian and Chechen languages. The Krakow city council had promised to help the station acquire the necessary equipment.

A month ago, the Russian embassy in Poland protested against the activity of the Chechen information center. Its protest note to the Polish Foreign Ministry was dismissed on the grounds that the Center was engaged in humanitarian activities.

Federal Troops Blockade Chechnya's Achkhoy-Martan

LD2403150395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1448 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy March 24 TASS—Federal troops blockaded on Friday [24 March] the Chechen town of Achkhoy-Martan. One of the last Chechen strongholds was surrounded after federal armour columns cut off the road between the settlements of Shaami- Yurt and Katar-Yurt in south-eastern Chechnya.

Commanders of federal troops appealed to the population of the blockaded Achkhoy-Martan to expell Dzhokhar Dudayev's militants in order to avoid shelling of the town.

Federal Forces Kept Prisoner in Chechnya

LD2403154095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1507 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Styazhkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stavropol March 24 TASS—As many as 82 Russian servicemen are now kept prisoner by Dudayev's supporters. Colonel-General Anatoliy Kvashnin, commander of the north-Caucasian military district, said this at a meeting with soldiers of units deployed in the Stavropol territory. General Kvashnin on Friday [24 March] completed a tour of a number of regions of the northern Caucasus. The commander said there is firm intention to to free the prisoners. He said funds are earmarked for the purpose and there are people in the area of the conflict who are instructed to bring about the prisoners' release.

Meanwhile, commentators of regional media note that the figure of prisoners-of-war given by the commander is about half that given by other sources, specifically, by the Public Commission for Russian Prisoners Release. The commission is headed by state adviser to the Ingush President, Deputy Ataman of the Don Cossack Corps, Pyort Kosov.

The commander of the North Caucasian district said that problems of prisoners exchange and ransom are being decided through regular contacts with the Chechen side. Virtually all terms of the Dudayev supporters are met to release a Russian soldier.

Kvashnin also said during the tour that the military in Chechnya have to fight against Chechen militants and also to cope with the hostile public opinion accusing the army of fighting a criminal war, the newspaper STAVROPOLSKIYE GUBERNSKIYE VEDOMOSTI writes. The commander said that instead of blaming the entire Russian Army it is necessary to spot and condemn those who had transferred and sold Russian arms to Chechnya, largely provoking the conflict.

Kvashnin believes hostilities in Chechnya will soon be over. The commander said that "those who fought in Chechnya are the cream of the Russian Army and its hope. They fulfilled their duty to protect Russia's integrity".

Chechen Doctors Express 'Fears' for Hospital Near Shali

AU2403161895 Paris AFP in English 1558 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kurchaloi, Russia, March 24 (AFP)—The main hospital still operating in territory controlled by Chechen separatists is to evacuate because of fears of Russian bombing, doctors said.

The crowded hospital in Kurchaloi, 15 kilometres northeast of the separatist capital Shali, will be evacuated as soon as possible, said Ali Kushaliyev, a traumatologist.

"Of course we think we could be hit. We would like to evacuate today," he said.

The new location has not yet been decided on and remains secret, he said.

"All the Russians have to know is that we treat wounded fighters and they'll hit us," said Maribyek Aliyev, another doctor.

Hospitals in Groznyy have been destroyed and the Shali hospital has been hit twice by Russian aerial bombing and shelling during the three-and-a-half month war, Aliyev said.

Medecines Sans Frontiers (MSF), an international humanitarian aid group, said the Kurchaloi hospital was planning to pull out, but was having trouble in finding a new base.

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Given the poor condition of many of the wounded in the hospital and the lack of equipment and ambulances, mounting the evacuation will be a "nightmare," said Dominic Meschen, with MSF.

The Russian armoured push to encircle Shali and Argun has brought the war to the doorstep of Kurchaloi and nearby explosions from artillery barrages and aerial bombing shakes windows in the town.

The hospitals in Shali and Gudermes, both major towns, have become untenable due to the fighting.

The hospital in Kurchaloi only treats the wounded and has no beds or staff to treat the sick, doctors said. Patients are moved away from the fighting as soon as possible for their saftey.

Chechen Troops Report Russian Attack on Gudermes

LD2403194595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHECHNYA, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The federal troops and the Chechen armed forces have been fighting on the outskirts of Gudermes on Friday, the general staff of the Chechen armed forces told Interfax. It also said that "following bomb attacks and artillery preparations the federal troops launched an attack on Chechnya's second largest city (35 kilometers east of Groznyy)."

On Friday, fighting was on along the Chechen militants' defense line running across Mesker Yurt, Germenchuk, Belgatoy and Chechen Aul, the same source said. If the federal troops accomplish a breakthrough in this direction, they may reach the populated area of Shali 35 kilometers east of Groznyy, and get a theoretical opportunity to surround the Gudermes grouping of the Chechen armed forces.

The Chechen side alleges that both sides are sustaining considerable losses." [quotation mark as received]

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Mobile Information Center in Mozdok (North Ossetia), has denied the reports by the Chechen sources. Our corespondent was told, for instance, that "the federal troops did not carry out any large-scale operations near Gudermes or other populated areas,"

According to official sources, Russian units continue "to press the Dudayev militants out, and are taking measures to block a number of populated areas controlled by the Dudayev supporters."

"The reports by Chechen sources on considerable losses sustained by the federal troops are also untrue," said the Mobile Information Center spokesman.

Filatov: Moscow Aims To End Military Activity by Apr

LD2403220695 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Military activity in Chechnya will be over by April, presidential administration head Sergey Filatov believes. He says the Russian leadership is aiming for this. The head of the president's administration also believes a permanent OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] mission is possible in Chechnya.

OSCE Delegation Returns to Moscow From Groznyy

LD2503012795 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2352 GMT 24 Mar 95

[From "Nota Bene" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] delegation led by Hungarian diplomat Istvan Gyarmati has just returned from the Chechen conflict area to Moscow, and we have the opportunity to recount today's work by the European diplomats in our exclusive report.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent over video of delegation in Groznyy's damaged streets, of racing armored cars] The members of the OSCE delegation and the conciliatory commission on implementing the agreement on public accord spent the third day of their visit to the Chechen conflict zone in Groznyy. They visited the northern and central parts of the city, seeing hospitals, local military headquarters, a bakery. They listened to local citizens who used the chance to pour out their troubles. Strange as it might seem, the people mostly complain about army ill- discipline.

The delegation had to move about Groznyy in armored vehicles as snipers still periodically appear in various districts of the city, as if to remind people that the war is not over yet in those parts. Thus all the members of the delegation said that the top priority now is to establish peace.

[Arkadiy Volskiy, chairman of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs] There definitely have to be talks on ending military operations here. Talks on elections and the constitutional arrangement should start straightaway.

[Correspondent] Other members of the conciliatory commission share the opinion of Arkadiy Volskiy, who did much to start the negotiations process.

[Andrey Loginov, head of the Russian president's administration directorate] The main task is to get the talks started.

[Correspondent] The OSCE representatives have already been to the conflict zone twice. They hope to open a permanent representative office in Groznyy in April to help the normalization of the situation in the region along.

[Istvan Gyarmati] I hope we can help in creating the framework for real talks. We hope our efforts will bring results.

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[Correspondent] It remains to be hoped that the conclusions drawn by the delegation will be heeded in Moscow. [end recording]

Progress in Chechnya Eyed, Grachev Cited

MM2403170395 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Nikolay Burbyga: "In Chechnya—Spring, Mud, and the Smell of Spilled Blood"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy-Moscow—The war has been squeezed out of the capital of the Chechen Republic. Leaving the city, the federal troops have approached the cities of Argun, Gudermes, and Shali and dug in. MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] subunits are mainly operating in Groznyy today....

Back at the beginning of March internal troops took control of the last stronghold of Dudayev's supporters in Groznyy—Chernorechye—without a single enemy shot being fired. Several troop rings have now been created around the city. Defense Ministry subunits and units have recently taken a back seat, as it were. They merely give support to internal troops—air and artillery support, above all—when they encounter serious resistance from Dudayev's supporters, but also when special-purpose militia detachments conduct measures to comb residential districts.

Today it can boldly be stated that life in Groznyy is being put right, albeit slowly. Occasional sniper shots can be heard during the day, but they do not seriously hinder the city's "reanimation."

The scene is quite peaceful alongside the former presidential palace, one of the main symbols of the Dudayev regime—civil defense subunits are clearing the square and pulling down structures damaged in the fighting and obstructions. In other places in the capital the water and power supplies are primarily being restored, and the work of mail and telegraph communications and projects in the social sphere is being organized. In the "spontaneous" little markets, which are still not numerous, it is possible to buy not only foodstuffs but also everything else that did not perish in the war and that only recently was buried beneath obstructions. Domestic goods and chattels are also taken to the market and sold for a song.

Residents are returning to the city every day. The republic administration and city hall, which is headed by Beslan Gantemirov, are already working here, and administrative sections are being set up in the rayons of Groznyy that are being liberated. For example, bakeries are operating in Zavodskoy and Staropromyslovskiy Rayons, and their output is given out to residents free of charge, and hospitals have already been restored. Water in the city presents the greatest difficulty. Several dozen kilometers from the city the military have discovered a half-destroyed water pipeline, which, in their opinion, will become the main source of drinking water for the city in the very near future. For the time being they have to make do with imported water.

The city's reconstruction could have proceeded faster but for gunmen's night sallies. They infiltrate Groznyy by day in the guise of returning civilians and hit at prearranged targets by night. On the day that I was in Groznyy paratroopers discovered two shoulder- fired antitank rocket launchers and several rounds for them in a house not far from their block post. The frightened owner reported that some people had come the day before, left something, and advised her to keep quiet.

...No one will venture to say exactly what forces Dudayev has at his disposal today. In the staff of the Joint Grouping of Russian Troops in Chechnya I was told that this information is formulated on a daily basis by all forms of reconnaissance. Dudayev's detachments probably number approximately 15,000 gunmen.

The main forces are concentrated in Argun, Shali, Gudermes, and Samashki. The minister of defense, who visited Groznyy recently, reported in conversation with IZVESTIYA's correspondent that Dudayev's resistance has not yet been broken, and it will be necessary to resolve jointly with the MVD the tasks of liquidating the illegal armed formations for more than a month to come. At the same time he pointed out that the troops will now operate differently than before: Units and subunits of the Armed Forces will cordon off population centers, while internal troops will directly tackle the disarming of gunmen. Grachev replied in the negative to a question about the rumor that Moscow is harboring a plan to divide Chechnya in two parts: One, which has already been purged of Dudayev, will go to Moscow, while the other will be left to Dudayev. "The people of Russia will not understand us, those who are fighting now for Russia's integrity will not understand us. This will be a blasphemy against those who have died here.... I am still gambling on the conflict's peaceful settlement, however. But if this fails, the combat operations to disarm and liquidate the illegal bandit formations will continue."

The leadership of the military grouping in Chechnya is now seeking ways to end the hostilities. Contacts are being made both with the civilian population and with field commanders. The sober- minded section of the Chechen population already stands foursquare behind a peaceful solution to the problem. For instance, in Samashki elders spoke out against gunmen remaining in the population center. Attempts are being made to organize a dialogue in other areas too. But, in the opinion of most of the officers to whom I spoke, dialogue is, sadly, not being arranged everywhere. Primarily because Dzhokhar Dudayev and his entourage, having made the decision to fight on to the bitter end, do not need it.

"The Dudayev followers are using the negotiating period purely to strengthen their positions and to regroup their forces and materiel," Ranking NCO Sergey Pokormyako, deputy commander of a 104th Airborne Assault

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Division reconnaissance platoon, believes. "Our subunits are 400 and sometimes even fewer meters away from the Dudayev men. All that separates us is the Argun River. We can see them digging in and using engineering equipment to do so. We are digging in too and monitoring the enemy. We are returning fire against identified mortar batteries and artillery pieces."

According to the intelligence information available to the assault troops of the 104th Division, they are facing a grouping of up to 3,000 men which has eight units of armored equipment. Apart from artillery pieces, of which the assault troops have counted 15, there are also around 20 mortars. The latter have been particularly "busy" during the truce.

"Dudayev's men today are altogether no longer like they were initially—their bragging has diminished. And we have adapted to them and been able to second-guess their tactics," the ranking NCO continued. "The strength of the Dudayev men was that they hid behind the civilian population like a living shield. They are now wedged between Gudermes, Argun, and Shali. They have nowhere to go. I am sure they will not take to the hills. They will not have the safety shield there that they had in Groznyy."

Ranking NCO Sergey Pokormyako has considerable fighting experience behind him—he began in the peacekeeping battalion in Tskhinvali. He has been in Chechnya since last November. He took Dudayev's palace. On 1 January he and his platoon helped the 131st Maykop Brigade, which had been pinned down by the gunmen near the train station.

"That was where there was a real bloodbath," he said. "We took 50 percent of all our losses there—at the train station. We learned a sorry lesson from it. It was all banally simple. We chose the right time to attack. Captured Dudayev supporters later told us that. We also achieved surprise. The Maykop Brigade attacked down Mayakovskiy Street and, meeting no organized resistance, entered the train station area. The commanders thought they had an easy victory, relaxed, and failed to organize a proper defense, which led to tragedy."

Sergey Pokormyako is a contract serviceman. He concluded a three-year contract and still has 18 months to serve. In the two months of fighting in Chechnya he has earned the 900,000 rubles due him. He is thinking of leaving the Army—not because of the low pay for military work, but for another reason. What he is doing here, risking his life, is not currently held in esteem in Russia, to put it mildly....

Why? Soldiers cannot understand this here in the blood and the mud. They can only badmouth the politicians. But nobody listens to them.

Military Spokesman on Groznyy Reconstruction

LD2503145395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Mar 25 (Interfax)—Active reconstruction work is under way in Groznyy, the war-devastated capital of the Chechen republic, a Russian military spokesman there told Interfax.

Water supply resumed in Chernorechye and Oktyabrsk districts and demolition work is in progress at the city's railway station. Bomb disposal units have cleared 43 related facilities and a 113- kilometer length of the railway line. The number of explosives uncovered runs at 3,242 including 124 mines and about 2,000 artillery shells.

Repair work is under way on both sides of the branch line from Groznyy to Nazran with 19 freight and 4 passenger trains passing from Mozdok to Kizlyar in the past 24 hours.

Refugees are coming back in droves to Groznyy whose population now runs at more than 135,000.

Government 25 Mar Statement on Chechnya Situation

LD2503173895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1727 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—The Russian Government's press service on Saturday issued a report on the latest developments in the Chechen Republic.

The military and political situation in Chechnya has not changed radically over the past twenty-four hours, according to the Mobile Information Centre. The devastated capital Groznyy is being restored. Another two city districts have been connected to the water supply system. Repair work is being done at the railway station. To date, 43 station facilities and 113 kilometres of tracks have been cleared of mines.

Local residents continue returning to Groznyy. The current population of the city makes up 135,000 people as compared with 70,000 last February.

After being defeated at the Argun juncture, illegal armed formations retreated southeast to reinforce the Shali and Gudermes groupings.

Federal troops' advance prompted Chechen leaders and local residents to search for a peaceful solution to the conflict. Chechnya's mufti M. Arsanukayev urged Chechens to lay down their arms and cease the bloodshed. Cases are registered when field commanders get into contact with senior officers of the united army group, announcing their readiness to surrender.

Local residents at many villagers continue squeezing out Chechen fighters and try to enter into negotiations with federal troop commanders.

The attitude of residents towards Russian troops changes as they receive reports about Russian servicemen's

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behaviour on occupied territories, which has nothing to do with atrocities and violence ascribed to them by Dudayev loyalists.

OSCE Spokesman: Dudayev of 'No Importance' in Peace Talks

LD2503222695 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1900 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] We will begin the bulletin with the events in Chechnya. Throughout the day the situation there did not change dramatically, the government press service reports. [passage omitted]

At the same time, the situation in the town [Groznyy] is far from being safe, Istvan Gyarmati, head of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] mission, who has recently visited the conflict zone, admitted in an interview with our correspondent.

[Begin Gyarmati recording] The situation in Groznyy itself is not very stable. It is not safe at night. Unfortunately, control over the federal troops, including those who are supposed to establish order there, is very weak, to put it mildly. [end recording]

[Announcer] The OSCE spokesman thinks that peace talks are the only way of resolving the Chechen problem.

[Begin Gyarmati recording] I do not mean Dudayev personally. I think he is of no interest, of no importance in this context. But if he has...[pauses] If these groups have the support of the population—and obviously they do—then they should be involved in the political process. [end recording]

Russian Commander: 'Operation Far From Over'

LD2503105295 London THE INDEPENDENT in English 25 Mar 95 p 9

[Report on interview with General Anatoliy Kulikov, Russian commander of forces in Chechnya, by Andrew Higgins: "Chechens Warned: Give In or Face Extermination"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mozdok—General Anatoliy Kulikov the commander of Russian forces in Chechnya, stabbed a large coloured map on his wall, his hand chopping at a filigree of country roads with the exactitude of a surgeon hacking through a piece of stubborn flesh. "The operation is far from over," he said.

Russia's army, stalled for two months in the ruins of the Chechen capital of Groznyy, is again on the move and intends to have two thirds of the rebellious region under its control by the start of summer: "We have cut them off here, here and here."

Moscow, General Kulikov said, had sent nearly 60,000 men into Chechnya about 20,000 more than previous estimates of the scale of Russia's biggest and most traumatic military campaign since the war in Afghanistan.

Now that Groznyy has been reduced to a nightmarish heap of rubble, its streets filled with dazed survivors and its wrecked buildings entombing the remains of uncounted dead, Russian forces are starting to pound their way through what, until this week, was a band of rebel-held territory lying to the south and east of the city.

"We are not planning to liquidate them," General Kulikov said, of the villages that have continued to resist Russia's firepower, "but if they offer resistance we will be forced to take adequate measures."

It was a similar threat that led to the destruction of Groznyy and, with artillery fire and Grad rockets raining down on Chechen positions throughout this week, the peaceful solution demanded by foreign diplomats and anti-war activists in Russia seems as far away as ever.

The upsurge of fighting coincided with a visit to neighbouring Ingushetia by a delegation from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which pleaded in vain for a ceasefire, to allow it to visit Chechnya.

Russia now claims to have captured Argun, one of the last strongholds of rebels loyal to the Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, and yesterday said that it had encircled the village of Achkoi-Martan, another centre of fierce resistance.

"We would like the whole war to end quickly, even now while I am here talking to you," said General Kulikov at his headquarters, a brick building safely removed from the chaos and filth of the battles raging about 75 miles to the south-east. "But, unfortunately it won't end so rapidly."

At Russia's command centre in Mozdok, formerly a base for Soviet strategic bombers in the region of North Ossetia, a war that began as a shambolic disaster has taken on a calmer, more confident, though scarcely less bloody, rhythm.

The same Russian army that in December drove journalists away from the gate at gunpoint is eager to explain itself - and to explain why it has taken so long to crush what was originally depicted as a handful of bandits backed by foreign mercenaries.

While sticking to the official line that President Dudayev and a coterie of supporters are to blame for the war General Kulikov gave a more generous estimate of the Chechens' fighting strength, which he put at 15,000 trained soldiers and 30,000 volunteers and home- guard troops.

An officer in Russia's Interior Ministry army, General Kulikov was appointed commander of the Chechen operation last month, in an attempt to prove, at least on

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paper, that the huge military campaign led by the Ministry of Defence had largely given way to a police exercise. He put the total death toll, or what official jargon terms "non-returning casualties", at 1,385. Civilian casualties, estimated at 24,000 by a Kremlin-appointed Human Rights Commissioner, Sergey Kovalev, are, he said, impossible to gauge.

Russia's offensive aims to put two thirds of Chechen territory under Russian control in the next two months and drive rebels into the Caucasus mountains, to the south.

"This will allow us to move the solution of this conflict from a military path to a political one, to move to discussion of new elections and legitimate power," the general said. Until that happens, the only subject for discussion is the one fixed by President Boris Yeltsin - the immediate disarming of the fighters loyal to Mr Dudayev.

"We don't have time to waste, to listen to them talk about the agenda for negotiations. There can be only one topic under negotiation and that is the mechanism for implementing our proposals."

Resistance, General Kulikov said is futile. "We hope that common sense will prevail, since the majority of the population do not want to continue a pointless war that can only lead to the extermination of the people."

Government 26 Mar Statement on Chechnya Situation

LD2603122495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1040 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—The press service of the Russian Federation's Government issued a statement today which says:

"The mobile information center reports that illegal armed formations did not show the group of federal forces any significant resistance over the past 24 hours.

"Sporadic mortar fire was registered coming from the populated area of Belgatoy.

"Groups made up of mercenaries and criminals as well as religious fanatics have taken up defense positions on the outskirts of the town of Shali.

"The arrival of groups of fighters from the southern and south- eastern areas has also been registered.

"At the same time the Dudayev leadership is not depending on being successful in the defense operations in this area and is continuing to move food reserves, equipment, and weapons into the mountain areas.

"There is information that the illegal armed formations in the town of Shali have on their side about 700 fighters from the Grey Wolves organization, who are well-known for their acts of terror in the territory of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

"The populated centers of Braguny and Darbankhi are at present semi-controlled by self-defense forces. Elders have expressed a wish that these places be occupied as quickly as possible by federal troops. They declare that the inhabitants of these populated centers have a positive attitude to the entry of subunits of federal troops and are ready to surrender their weapons.

"Information is being received that there is growing tension between the inhabitants of Gudermes and the fighters in the town. Under pressure from the local population, which has been showing dissatisfaction at their presence, the fighters have begun to leave in the direction of mountain villages.

"The attitude of the population to developments in the republic and the actions of federal troops is changing.

"It is noted that an increasing number of people are returning to their places of residence from mountain districts.

"According to refugees the combat actions are needed by groups of renegades, criminals, and active supporters of Dudayev, 'who have no way back.'

"On their return, the refugees are being met by small groups of fighters, who are threatening to shoot those refusing to join the illegal armed formations.

"The situation has become exacerbated among Dudayev's closest supporters. They are distraught and are blaming each other for the recent military defeats.

"Dudayev has issued a decree abolishing the so-called department of state security and removing Geliskhanov from the post of head of the special service. A 'special department' has been organized in place of the department of state security."

Chechen Commander Vows To Defend Shali

AU2603162795 Paris AFP in English 1608 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By Sebastian Smith]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Shali, Russia, March 26 (AFP)—Chechen separatists are prepared for a long war and will negotiate only if the Russians withdraw, the rebel force's chief commander said Sunday [26 March] .

But he also hinted the Chechens might be willing to compromise on independence from Russia.

There will be a major battle for Shali, one of the last Chechen strongholds, General Aslan Maskhadov, commander of Chechen independence fighters, told AFP.

"Shali, we are going to really defend," said Maskhadov, who made an unannounced appearance in Shali minutes before a fierce Russian helicopter gunship and artillery attack.

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If forced to flee to the nearby Caucasus mountains, his men will make the war a "nightmare" for the Russians, he said.

Maskhadov said he would negotiate only if Russia pulled out all its troops from Chechnya.

But the question of Chechnya's independence from the Russian Federation, which Moscow is fighting to end, is open to discussion, he said.

"We are not talking about that yet. We're simply asking to sit down at the table and talk—after a complete withdrawal of Russian troops," Maskhadov said.

"We would then sit down and solve the independence question. There are many possibilities, like elections and referendums, as long as the people are allowed to decide," he added.

"But they are holding a gun to our head," he said.

Early morning, Russian artillery opened up with a major barrage on central Shali and helicopters circled the town firing machine guns.

Chechen fighters fired back at the helicopters with heavy machineguns. The shelling hit the centre and across several residential neighborhoods.

Maskhadov and his bodyguards left quickly in a small Lada car with black-tinted windows.

Shells whistled overhead and exploded with thunderclaps among the small, mostly deserted houses, sending debris flying across back streets.

Cars drove at high speed and those on foot dashed from cover to cover.

One Chechen volunteer worked his way through back streets during the artillery barrage, crying "Allah Akhbar," or "God is great," at every nearby explosion.

The barrage ended a brief lull after a night of heavy artillery and rocket duels between Chechen positions around Shali and Russian troops positioned in a close semi-circle to the west and north.

Overnight, Grad rockets could be seen streaming out of Shali towards Russian positions and the flash of Russian return fire and illumination flares turned night into day.

The Russian army made key gains last week, notably taking the town of Argun after bombarding it for three months. But Maskhadov said his army was far from a spent force.

"We could have stayed in Argun for another month, fighting neighbourhood by neighbourhood as in Groznyy, but it had no significance to us anymore," he said.

"The Russians want to take Shali and Gudermes and push us into the mountains. Then they will say that they've won the war and we are just bandits in the hills," he said.

"I just wanted to show that I am ready to fight a real war, army against army, position against position," he said.

Maskhadov said his guerrilla forces would be able to use the mountains as an almost impregnable base for launching strikes on the Russians in the plains.

"I'll be back here to hit them. If we go to the mountains, then it will be a nightmare for the Russians, the worst stage for them," he said.

"The mountains will be our kind of war," he added.

Maskhadov said he had met with President Dzhokhar Dudayev on Saturday and that the separatist leader, who has barely appeared in public since the war started, was "not far from" Shali and in good health.

Meanwhile in Tsotsin Yurt—a village lying on the front-line that stetches between Shali and the other remaining stronghold of Gudermes—talks between Chechen and Russian commanders failed to produce results.

Chechen fighters said they refused to surrender and an assault by Russian tanks and big guns, just 200 metres outside the refugee- packed village, seemed inevitable.

Shali, the self-declared rebel capital, has became the focus of Chechen resistance since the fall of Argun.

Only a few civilians remain. They either have nowhere to escape or have decided to die in their hometown.

Dadal Magomadovich, a 57-year-old civilian with a bright red face, two rows of gold teeth and a fur hat, emerged from his courtyard and announced: "I'm guarding my house."

Conference Urges End To Chechen Bloodshed

LD2603183395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1757 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Styazhkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyatigorsk March 26 TASS—A peace- making conference on Chechnya adopted a charter of national accord in Pyatigorsk on Sunday aimed at halting the war and restoring peace in Chechnya.

The charter urged the leaders of large Chechen clans, irrespective of their positions with regard to the conflict, to sit down at the negotiating table and work out ways to stop bloodshed in Chechnya.

The conference was attended by representatives of Chechen clans, Chechen authorities, and the clergy, as well as Stanislav Govorukhin, head of the Russian State Duma commission investigating into the causes of the

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Chechen tragedy, Metropolitan Gedeon of Stavropol and Vladikavkaz, and Cossack Ataman Petr Fedosov.

The charter was welcomed by former Russian Parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov who also attended the conference.

"It is pointless to hold talks with Dzhokhar Dudayev. The path towards conflict settlement in Chechnya is through agreements with field commanders and the Chechen clergy," he said.

Khasbulatov believes that more and more field commanders act against Dudayev's concept and consider the clergy as an unquestionable authority.

The participants in the conference adopted an appeal to the Russian leadership, urging it to take measures to stop bloodshed and restore law and order in Chechnya.

Troops Send Back Chechnya Peace March Mothers

LD2703043295 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0200 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] On Sunday [26 March] afternoon Russian troops stopped participants in the Maternal Compassion March from Nazran to Groznyy on the border between Ingushetia and Chechnya. Around 150 march participants were detained by servicemen near the district center of Achkoy-Martan for five hours. Afterwards, participants in the march told our radio station they were forcibly put onto motor vehicles and taken away to the territory of Ingushetia. However, not all the march participants were returned to Nazran. According to Chris Hanson, a spokesman of the international organization of Quakers, Russian soldiers took Buddhist monks taking part in the march off in an unknown direction. The march participants still do not have any information about the 18 people.

OSCE Plans To Open Permanent Mission by Mid-Apr

LD2703103195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1009 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Yuriy Kozlov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is planning to open a permanent mission in Chechnya not later than mid- April, Istvan Gyarmati, the OSCE chairman's personal representative, who recently visited the Chechen conflict zone among a delegation of OSCE observers, told a press conference at the Hungarian Embassy here on Monday.

A decision on the matter is to be taken bilaterally by the Government of Russia and the Vienna-based OSCE permanent council, which is to meet for a session on Wednesday, March 29, Gyarmati said.

During a series of meetings and talks to be held here later in the day, Gyarmati hopes to get Russian leadership representatives' agreement on a respective joint statement.

According to the Hungarian diplomat, the OSCE permanent mission is to be accommodated in Groznyy. The mission staff will comprise six people whose activities are to be financed from OSCE funds.

Gyarmati described the mission's main tasks as being to assist in establishing the peace process based on a ceasefire and the conduct of negotiations and prevent the conflict from spreading over to neighbouring republics.

The OSCE mission staff will also contribute to restoring democratic institutions and rendering humanitarian aid to the civilian population, to preparing and holding free elections, the adoption of a constitution, and the conclusion of an agreement with federal authorities on the delimitation of powers.

The OSCE chief's representative expressed hope that the establishment of the mission will add to the OSCE possibilities to influence the peace process, for it is impossible to resolve the conflict militarily.

During a tour of Chechnya, the OSCE delegation had meetings and talks with representatives from the federal authorities, the provisional Chechen government, and with two ministers from the Dudayev administration.

On the whole, the federal authorities are in control of the situation on the territory which is under their care, which cannot be said about the provisional government which is yet to affirm its positions at the local level, Gyarmati said.

Sporadic Shooting Reported in Chechnya

LD2703121795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1145 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By unidentified ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—The situation in Chechnya remained complicated on Monday, the Russian Government press service said, but added that Chechen militants did not resort to heavy fighting over the past 24 hours.

However, sporadic shootings from small arms were reported from along the frontline and the militants had also opened brief artillery fire on Russian positions near the settlement of Germenchuk.

No other military activities were reported by the press centre so far.

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International Affairs

Reportage on President's Visit to Japan

Joint Declaration Signed

LD2303174695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1401 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, Mar 23 (Interfax-Ukraine)—The President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma and Prime Minister of Japan Tomiichi Murayama signed a joint declaration in Tokyo Thursday [23 March]. Japan recognized that the existence of a free, independent and sovereign Ukraine is an important factor in stability in Europe and meets the interests of the entire international community, a well-informed source in the presidential administration told Interfax-Ukraine.

Ukraine and Japan reached agreement on principles for reforming the United Nations and strengthening its functions. Ukraine voiced support for Japan's permanent membership in the UN Security Council.

During the talks Japan expressed readiness to back Ukraine's request for the compensation of losses caused by sanctions against ex-Yugoslavia, as well as the establishment of a more just system of making contributions to the UN.

During the talks the Japanese side confirmed intentions to help Ukraine eliminate the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. In addition, it offered a $150 million low-interest loan for covering the deficit in the balance of payments and a $50 million export loan for the purchase of mineral fertilizers.

After the signing ceremony Kuchma said that peace, friendship and accord with all countries of the world are the key objectives of the Ukrainian foreign policy and that relations with Japan are developing in this context.

Agreement on Control of Nuclear Materials

LD2403200795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, Mar 24 (Interfax - Ukraine)—Ukraine and Japan signed a document Friday on cooperation on control of export and import of nuclear materials so as to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

An Interfax-Ukraine correspondent reports from Tokyo that the document was signed by Ukrainian Environment Protection Minister Yuriy Kostenko and officials of the Japanese committee on cooperation in elimination of nuclear weapons.

The committee will make equipment and services for improvement of the use and maintenance of control over the export and import of nuclear materials available to Ukraine free of charge.

Ukraine will also receive aid to improve the state system of monitoring and protection of nuclear materials.

Report on Second Day of Visit

LD2403203195 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The program of the second day of our delegation's official visit to Japan ended up in the signing of a joint declaration by Ukraine and Japan, and a reception in honor of Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma given on behalf of Japan's Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama.

The main trends of possible cooperation between the two countries were outlined. Emphasis was laid down on machine-building, aircraft- and automobile-building in particular; modernization of the metallurgical, chemical, and oil refining industries of Ukraine; conversion of the military-industrial complex and the participation of Japan's business circles in this process; joint projects in the field of agriculture, transport, and communications. Added to this list should be special spheres of cooperation, the expansion of which was agreed at the summit level: The liquidation of nuclear weapons on the territory of Ukraine and minimization of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

The Japanese prime minister informed the Ukrainian president of the decision made by the Japanese Government concerning Tokyo's readiness to grant Ukraine a credit to the overall value of $200 million. An increase in the volume of technical aid to Ukraine for training market economy specialists on a permanent basis is also envisaged.

The issue of interaction within the framework of implementing the G-7 decision on Ukraine was considered. The sides reached understanding to the effect that Ukraine can and should play the role of a stabilizing factor, both at the regional and international levels.

These and other issues were reflected in a joint declaration by Ukraine and Japan, which contains the main principles of developing Ukrainian-Japanese relations and formulates strategic trends of bilateral cooperation. The declaration was signed by Leonid Kuchma and Mr. Murayama.

Leonid Kuchma had a series of meetings with representatives of Japanese business circles—at first, during his visits to the Tokyo Stock Exchange and to the center of the latest technologies of the Sony corporation, and then in his residence where Leonid Kuchma had profound conversations with leading Japanese businessmen: Leaders of corporations Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Hitachi, and Morinaga company.

In accordance with the program of the visit, the president of Ukraine and the persons accompanying him today took the (Sinkansen) fast train to Tokyo [as heard] where they were welcomed by Teichi Aramaki, governor

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of the Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto Mayor Tomoyuki Tanabe, local businessmen, and journalists.

This evening, a reception was given in honor of the president of Ukraine.

Tomorrow, 25 March, will be the last day of Leonid Kuchma's official visit to Japan. Apart from visiting Kyoto, the president of Ukraine will have a series of meetings in Nagoya, in particular, with the leadership of the world renowned corporation Toyota.

Japanese Businessmen's Cooperation Urged

LD2403170695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, Mar 24 (Interfax - Ukraine)—Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, addressing in Tokyo on Friday [24 March] Japanese businessmen, called on them to develop cooperation with Ukrainian enterprises.

Among the most promising directions of the Ukrainian-Japanese long-term cooperation, Kuchma called joint completion of unfinished Ukrainian technological and design projects, which are unique in the world practice.

For example, the Ukrainian president noted the production association "The Southern Machine-Building Plant", whose many technological programs have "no precedents in the world".

The second direction, believes Kuchma, is associated with the Japanese-Ukrainian cooperation in the aircraft- and car-building. He said that Japanese businessmen showed keen interest in taking part in the creation of a serial version of aircraft AN-70. The Ukrainian president expressed hope that "Japanese businessmen, after the 'absurd' crash of this plane, did not lose interest to this project and will take an active part in it."

Kuchma also called for cooperation in reconstructing Ukrainian oil refineries, metallurgical and chemical enterprises, for more intensive cooperation in the field of power-engineering and the use of alternative sources of energy, the use of Japanese bio-technologies in the Ukrainian agriculture, as well as for cooperation in the sphere of information to speed up the development of the trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Ukraine is interested, said its president, in the Japanese financial support for the reconstruction and modernization of industrial and energy projects, built by Ukrainian specialists, in the years of the existence of the former soviet Union, on the territory of China, countries of South Asia and Indochina, for the construction of railways in countries of the South-East Asia and North Africa.

Kuchma emphasized that the joint development of unique bauxite deposits in Guinea with the later export to Japan of the aluminum produced in Ukraine, has also good prospects.

Kuchma Ends Visit; Results Summarized

LD2503194995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1930 GMT 25 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kopnov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo March 25 TASS—Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on Saturday [25 March] finished his first official visit to Japan.

During the visit, the two sides reached an agreement under which Japan is to extend 200 mln [million] dollars' worth of credits to Ukraine, while Ukraine is to back Japan's bid for permanent membership in the U.N. Security Council.

While in Tokyo, Kuchma was received by Japanese Emperor Akihito, met Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama and members of the parliamentary association for Japanese-Ukrainian friendship, and addressed representatives of the country's business community. He also attended the opening ceremony at Ukraine's Embassy in Tokyo.

The Ukrainian president's trip was largely a fact-finding one, therefore it was not expected to produce any substantial results. The two sides just signed a joint statement to demonstrate the similarity of approaches to certain international issues. Specifically, they stressed the need for extension without time-limit the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

In response to Kiev's commitment to market reforms, Tokyo pledged to continue assistance to Ukraine both on a bilateral basis, and in the framework of international organizations. The emphasis was laid on the need for the soonest possible liquidation of nuclear stockpiles inherited by Ukraine from the former Soviet Union and for the closure of the Chernobyl plant, the site of the world's worst nuclear accident, as not complying with safety standards.

After a short tour about Japan, during which he visited Kyoto and Nagoya, the Ukrainian leader left the country.

Kuchma Japan Visit Produces 'Modest' Results

MM2703101795 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Sergey Agafonov: "There Will Be No 'Japanese Miracle' in Ukraine, Because Ukraine is Inhabited by Ukrainians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tokyo—President of sovereign Ukraine Leonid Kuchma is on the first visit to Japan in the history of bilateral relations.

The Ukrainian leader's arrival in Tokyo was not a major event, but protocol is protocol—the visitor from Kiev was granted an audience with the Japanese emperor, had talks with the head of the Japanese cabinet of ministers,

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and addressed representatives of business circles, telling them about Ukraine's potential and urging them to invest.

But the Ukrainian leader's trip to Tokyo was necessary and useful to both countries. Indeed relations are still "virgin territory," independent Ukraine remains a little known curiosity to Japan, and the Ukrainian "soul" is a mystery and enigma to the Japanese. Ukraine does not feature at all in Japanese diplomatic priorities, Tokyo does not have any particular "designs" on Kiev, and as far as the Japanese are concerned Ukraine represents the range of problems that are being addressed by the "seven"—they are the Chernobyl issue, questions of nuclear disarmament, foreign debt.

To put it in simpler terms, there is no actual agenda in bilateral dialogue at the moment and there is no great desire on the part of the Japanese (there are many indications of this) to rush in and start plowing the Ukrainian furrow.

As a pragmatic and competent politician, Kuchma had no illusions at the outset about the prospects, and the important thing is that he almost avoided the temptation to press the Japanese for money—the Ukrainian president placed the main emphasis on "educational functions," using the trip as a means of explaining to unfamiliar rich partners what Ukraine and its political leadership represent. In his overall assessment of the visit Kuchma was restrained, which is also nice to see—what is the point of fancy words when there are no facts to back them up. A joint statement was signed and Kiev got $200 million from Tokyo through two credit lines—these were all the actual "material" results. In this case the "modest" outcome should not cause too much distress—it is just that the objective conditions were not ripe for a bigger "harvest."

This explains the heavy emphasis on Russia at President Kuchma's final press conference in the Japanese press club—the reporters were clearly not interested in the details of the Kiev visitor's Japanese program, but were focusing attention on Kiev's relations with Moscow with regard to the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea, and the Duma statement on the Crimean question. Kuchma obviously did not want to discuss these topics in Japan, but he had to. In particular, with regard to Crimea, the Ukrainian president said the following: "It is an internal matter. We know what separatism leads to and we are endeavoring to resolve the problem expeditiously... The opinion of a few dozen deputies is not the opinion of those who live in Crimea. There is not question of abolishing autonomy, but we believe that there should be only one president in the country... Whatever way you look at it the Russian Duma has no right to make such decisions, or maybe it has simply forgotten what times we are living in."

The quote of the day, though, was not these statements, but the wonderfully and richly suggestive aphorism uttered by Kuchma at the press conference when he was talking about the future of the economic reforms on the territory in his charge. The president noted with conviction: "The Japanese miracle is impossible in Ukraine, because Ukraine is inhabited by Ukrainians. This had such a profound effect on the Japanese, the Ukrainian delegation, and the Russian correspondents present that there were no further questions for Kuchma and, having successfully completed the official part of the program, he left for a tour of the country—going to Kyoto and Nagoya."

Kuchma Favors Indefinite Prolongation of NPT

LD2403163395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TOKYO, Mar 24 (Interfax-Ukraine)—Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma favors an indefinite prolongation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. He said, however, that a number of terms must be observed to do so.

He told a press conference in Tokyo during his visit to Japan that Ukraine supports the U.S. proposal on the prolongation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but said that a number of terms must be fulfilled before the conference on the issue opens in New York on April 17.

Firstly, the U.S. and Russia must ratify the START-2 treaty. And secondly, it would be desirable to sign an agreement on the complete stopping of nuclear tests, he said. He announced that Ukraine had proposed drafting and concluding an agreement that would put an end to the production of fissionable materials.

Commenting on the situation in Crimea, he said that "the voices of 50-60 deputies who favor Crimea's independence should not be taken for the voice of the entire Crimean population." He also noted that "there must be only one president in a state."

Speaking about the State Duma resolution on Crimea, Kuchma expressed the opinion that "the Russian parliament had no right to take such a decision."

Kuchma: Kiev, Moscow To Sign 'Full-Scale' Treaty

LD2403140995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1354 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Kutakhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo March 24 TASS—Russia and Ukraine will shortly sign a full-scale treaty as there are no substantive obstacles to this. Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said this in answer to ITAR-TASS at a news conference for Japanese and foreign journalists held at the Japanese National Press Club in Tokyo on Friday [24 March].

The dispute on the Black Sea Fleet has almost been settled as "the recent visit to Ukraine by a state Russian

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delagation headed by First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets advanced the matters to virtual solution of the problem". "Moreover, we agree with Russian President Boris Yeltsin that specific decisions should be made on the Black Sea Fleet, not political declarations", Kuchma said in answer to a question from ITAR-TASS.

Kuchma said that the problem regarding Crimea is an internal Ukrainian affair and that Kiev is deciding it "in accordance with the present constitution and international law". Pointing to the danger presented by separatism he said that "the opinion of 50-60 deputies who voted in favour of regarding Crimea as a state does not reflect the attitude of people who live there". He stressed that "no one calls in quesiton Crimean autonomy, but we are confident that there must be one president in a country".

Russian Deputies Ask Yeltsin To Consult on Ukraine

LD2403154695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1350 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Leaders of nine State Duma factions have urged President Yeltsin to convene a special session for consultations with the government and parliament on relations with Ukraine.

In a letter, signed by leaders of the Agrarian Party, the Communist Party, the Russia's Women faction, the Liberal-Democratic Party, the Democratic Party, PRES, YABLOKO, the New Regional Policy Party, and the Stability group, the Ukrainian parliament's decisions on Crimea are denounced as "humiliating the will of the Crimean people and threatening the stability in the region bordering with Russia."

As is known, on March 17th, Ukraine's parliament abolished the constitution and the presidency in Crimea.

The signatories voiced concern at "the contradictory reaction to these events by some Russian government leaders, Foreign Ministry officials, and Federal Assembly deputies."

The deputies pointed out that "there have been especially equivocal assessments in the State Duma of the Russian government delegation's work at talks with Ukraine under the leadership of First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets."

Moroz on Statement of Russian Deputies on Crimea

LD2503225695 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 2200 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As reported by UKRINFORM's parliamentary correspondent on Friday March 24, the chairman of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada [Supreme Council], Oleksandr Moroz, has said that the statement issued by some deputies of the Russian parliament, Gosduma [State Duma], on March 22 concerning the situation in the autonomous Republic of Crimea only expressed the opinions of the Russian deputies involved, and that he does not consider such statements as an act of interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine since they were not official statements. He added that it is normal for neighbors to comment on each others' actions.

Mr. Moroz was speaking at a press conference in Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, dedicated to the activities of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada in the past week. The press conference was dominated by the Crimean crisis.

Mr. Moroz admitted that the Crimean issue was one of the most important issues discussed by the Ukrainian parliament in the past week, but declined to give a direct answer on whether or not the Verkhovna Rada planned to dissolve the Crimean Supreme Soviet. He said that the Crimean Supreme Soviet is not a criminal organ acting against the interests of the Crimean people. He, however, warned that appropriate measures stipulated in the Ukrainian Constitution would be taken against the Crimean parliament if its actions violate Ukrainian legislation.

Mr. Moroz also commented on other decisions taken by the Verkhovna Rada in the past week, including the approval of the state budget for 1995.

EU Supports Moves in Crimea

WS2703111995 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0840 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's press center reported on Friday, March 24, Ukraine's Ambassador to Brussels Volodymyr Vasylenko visited the EU Headquarters to meet with EU Secretary General Cutiliero.

The EU secretary general reportedly informed the Ukrainian envoy about EU's most recent decisions involving promotion of EU-Ukrainian bilateral relations, and Mr. Vasylenko, in turn, presented the Ukrainian side's vision of prospects for stepping up bilateral contacts.

During the meeting, Mr. Vasylenko elaborated on the parliament's Crimean resolutions and moves taken to this effect by the Ukrainian president and government.

The Ukrainian ambassador substantiated these as meant for political stabilization in the Crimean Autonomous Republic. The thus furnished information was met with full understanding by the EU secretary general, who reiterated the leading pan-European institutions' unaltered position in favor of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As Mr. Cutiliero noted, the EU has no intention to raise the Crimean issue, since this is

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Ukraine's internal affair, and the Ukrainian leadership's moves are in perfect conformity with international legal norms and principles.

Supreme Council Chairman Leaves for South Korea

LD2703020695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2105 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Ivan Sayko for TASS]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 27 Mar—On Sunday [26 March] evening, Oleksandr Moroz, chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Council, left on a four-day official visit to the Republic of Korea. Meetings with the president of the country, the speaker of the national assembly, the deputy prime minister, and a number of ministers are planned. A Ukrainian-Korean seminar with the participation of chairmen of Supreme Council commissions and a group of Ukrainian and Korean businessmen will take place during the visit.

The head of the Ukrainian parliament will take part in the opening ceremony in Seoul of a Ukrainian commercial and industrial mission.

Shmarov, Azerbaijani Acting Premier Talk in Baku

LD2403222095 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] After the end of the Idex-95 international arms exhibition, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister for the military-industrial complex and Minister of Defense Valeriy Shmarov paid a working visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan en route from the United Arab Emirates to Kiev.

[Unidentified correspondent] Azerbaijan's leaders greeted the Ukrainian delegation warmly. Valeriy Shmarov met Acting Prime Minister Fuat Guliyev at Azerbaijan's Cabinet of Ministers. The sides exchanged information on the state of affairs in their countries and discussed a whole series of issues regarding the development of bilateral cooperation. For example, Ukraine is able to help Azerbaijan in the field of transporting cargoes of the national economy by air. For its part Azerbaijan can render substantial assistance to our state in resolving the energy problem. Here's an interesting detail: Azerbaijan's head of government noted that out of all the CIS countries Azerbaijan has the strongest contacts namely with Ukraine.

Valeriy Shmarov also met Azerbaijan's minister of defense, while the members of our delegation had fruitful talks with their counterparts.

Yesterday Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev received the head of the Ukrainian delegation. He expressed his personal thanks to Ukraine's leadership and people for their political support for Azerbaijan at a difficult time of Azerbaijan's struggle for independence and political stability. At the same time Heydar Aliyev frankly informed the members of our state's delegation about the attempt at a coup d'etat, which took place in the early hours of 17 March. The head of the Republic of Azerbaijan also expressed the hope that he would pay an official visit to Ukraine at the invitation of Leonid Kuchma in the near future.

Valeriy Shmarov and Fuat Guliyev signed a working protocol of the meeting in Baku today, which is a prerequisite for concluding an interstate agreement on trade and economic cooperation between Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

Treaties on CIS Agrarian Market Signed

WS2703113195 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0834 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On March 22, a meeting of the Intergovernmental Council of the CIS countries on problems of the agricultural sector finished worked in Chisinau. During this meeting two multilateral agreements were signed: On the Necessity to Establish an Agrarian Market in the Eastern Region and On Scientific Technical Cooperation. The first agreement aims to protect the CIS market from the over-importation of foreign-made food products. The second agreement foresees the joint use of scientific-technical facilities of such large agricultural enterprises as the Homel plant of agricultural machine-building (Belarus), the Rostov plant ROSSELMASH ("Russian Agricultural Machines"), and a number of others. The Interstate Economic Committee of the CIS countries established a special working group of the Council, chaired by Russian Vice Prime Minister Zaverukha. Petro Sabluk, first Ukrainian vice prime minister, who headed the Ukrainian delegation in Chisinau, signed both agreements.

Chernobyl Chief Calls EU Credit Offer 'Ultimatum'

LD2603165895 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Serhiy Parashyn, general director of the Chernobyl nuclear power station, assessed as an ultimatum the actions of the European Union council on granting credits of 85 million ECUs to Ukraine only on the condition that the Chernobyl nuclear power station is closed. In an interview with the press he stressed that halting the Chernobyl nuclear power station is economically disadvantageous from the point of view of Ukraine's national interest. The station currently makes a marked contribution to the state's energy system. The G-7 countries have planned to withdraw from production a facility worth three billion dollars, Serhiy Parashyn said, but are offering us 200 million dollars instead. The station's general director noted that if these countries are truly concerned about safety, let them build

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two of the safest modern generating sets alongside the Chernobyl nuclear power station using credit funds; in 10 years time Ukraine would have repaid the debt. Serhiy Parashyn believes that this would be an ideal solution.

National Affairs

Kuchma Aims To 'Halt Negative Processes'

MM2403121095 Moscow TRUD in Russian 24 Mar 95 pp 1,9

[Interview with President Leonid Kuchma by Aleksandr Potapov and Stanislav Prokopchuk; date, place not given: "Leonid Kuchma: Russia Has Been, Is, and Will Remain Our Main Strategic Partner. Ukrainian President Answers TRUD's Questions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [TRUD] Leonid Danilovich, what would you define as the three most acute and most worrying problems for you as president?

[Kuchma] Accord in society. Everything hinges on that. The second complex problem is the negative balance of trade and payments. And also the technological lag in fundamental sectors of industry, which are unable to survive in world market conditions without modernization. That is an ailment suffered not only by Ukraine; we all lived "in a single home." I am also bound to mention the social tension and people's increasing impatience with falling living standards. And last, there is the very painful question for Ukraine of authority.... As you can see, instead of three problems I have mentioned five things that worry me.

[TRUD] Let us go on. Are you content with the current state of Ukrainian-Russian relations? What are the prospects, notably in connection with the signing of the bilateral treaty now in preparation?

[Kuchma] As yet there is not much cause for particular joy. Can we be content with our large debts to our neighbor for energy sources? Can we be delighted with enterprises' reciprocal payment arrears? And with our goods being mutually ousted from markets that we could have opened up together? Take the international sphere. So far Ukraine and Russia have not conducted even one coordinated significant action to boost our countries' prestige and bring us mutual benefit.

Scientific and cultural ties have been extremely weakened. I supported the idea mooted by the presidents of the CIS academies of sciences to recreate the single scientific area and submitted a corresponding proposal to the Commonwealth heads of state.... And you can judge the level of cultural ties from the state of the Ukrainian Culture Center in Moscow, which has been undergoing major repairs for several years now.

If our relations are better than they were a year ago, they are considerably worse than they could be to our mutual benefit. Let us be frank: There are forces on both sides which have no interest in this.

In this connection the impending signing of the bilateral treaty is not the end in itself but one instrument that will make it possible to open up a new phase in our cooperation and will provide new opportunities for enterprises, private firms, scientific, educational, and cultural establishments and for political and civil associations. However, I cannot help having the premonition that there will be forces that will try to block the signing of the treaty. Moreover, that is obvious from a number of statements and articles, both in our country and particularly in Russia. Everything will ultimately depend on the two leaders' political will.

[TRUD] How do you regard the Russian-Belarusian agreements secured in Minsk? Are you ready for your part to embark on a similar level of integration?

[Kuchma] It is the right of Belarus—its president and Supreme Soviet—to sign these agreements. I am bound to take into consideration the legislative base, for instance, currently operating in Ukraine. The fact, for instance, that we are a neutral state and cannot join any military blocs.... I am willing to embark on full, open economic cooperation and lift the restrictions on the movement of goods, and that should determine everything else. There is no need to rush; I am opposed to revolution and in favor of evolutionary development.

[TRUD] How do you view the idea of a Eurasian union?

[Kuchma] Let us actually get to grips with the CIS.

[TRUD] You are sometimes all but accused of betraying your election manifesto and your promises to deepen integration with Russia, as well as your commitments on dual citizenship and the status of the Russian language....

[Kuchma] Yes, these subjects are often played up at rallies by our "left-wingers." What can I say? I hold to the conviction that Russia has always been, is, and will remain Ukraine's main strategic partner.

In my view precedence should now be given to joint enterprise, to the creation of transnational financial and industrial groups. In order to stimulate this process I recently signed an edict on financial and industrial groups. The first group of this kind in the aviation engine industry has already been set up, involving 50 Russian and Ukrainian enterprises. People in the parliament are trying to block the creation of financial and industrial groups. Once again the communists and the socialists, who often forget their recent declarations regarding cooperation with Russia, frequently call the shots here. But life will help us to overcome the artificial obstacles.

As for the claims regarding my commitment to the idea of "dual citizenship," that is utterly wrong. That institution could generate more problems than it resolves. Ask people: The overwhelming majority would agree with that. By agreement with the Russians we have taken the

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problem of dual citizenship out of the negotiating process. Especially since it has become the subject of speculation.

To some extent this also applies to the status of the Russian language in Ukraine. I used to advocate and still do advocate official status for it. But being a realist I understand the difficulty of this decision at the legislative level. No edicts and orders will ensure the real use of Russian as an official language in the western regions, just as no edicts and orders will ban the use of Russian in our eastern areas. In a few years life will sort everything out and the acuteness of the problem will disappear on its own.

[TRUD] We are aware how tricky this question is, but nevertheless: How do you in Kiev view the current situation in Moscow, and our constantly voiced misgivings regarding the possible abandonment of the course of reform and -democratization?

[Kuchma] It is hardly right for us in Kiev to make assessments and give the Russian leadership tips. But nor would I consider the opposite position entirely correct. I do not think that you have any forces capable of blocking the course of reform. You know, I spent the bulk of my life working in the missile-space sector and I have a good idea of what acceleration is. The transformation of the economy has gone so far in Russia that it can hardly be reversed. An abrupt halt to or an abrupt shift in any large-scale social process that has gained momentum could spell destruction for society. Such ill-conceived actions can regrettably be observed in our country where the parliament is, for instance, blocking privatization. That is why our enterprises are forced to talk to Russian partners in what are indeed different languages.

[TRUD] What is your view of the tragic situation in Chechnya? Are there any conclusions for you in that?

[Kuchma] It is hard for me to pass judgment on everything without knowing the full facts. Nor can I be impartial here. I have spoken about this with Boris Yeltsin on two occasions and I realized that he wants to escape from the difficult situation rapidly. It is blasphemous for anyone to use it for political ends. Although I do agree with those who wonder where we have been for the past three years and why we did not tackle this from the very outset. You get the impression that some people in Russia stood to gain from the creation of this conflict. The history of the Caucasus indicates that it is hopeless to resolve problems there by the sword....

[TRUD] There has been a report that you said that these events prompted the idea of creating a professional army in Ukraine.

[Kuchma] I said: It is a shame that untrained boys are dying. And a professional army is the thing of the future. But that is a remote prospect for us. Today Ukraine is economically unable to perform that task. Professionals need to be paid "professionally...."

[TRUD] Are there any grounds for comparing the "Chechnya problem" with the situation in the Crimea in your republic? Can you guarantee that all issues will be resolved peacefully? Will the parliament's decision to abrogate the Crimean Constitution and the post of president not have unpredictable consequences?

[Kuchma] We are not going to superimpose the "Chechnya problem" on Crimea. The first and most important point is that no one in Ukraine is encroaching on Crimean autonomy. But all parts of one country should live by the same laws. I can guarantee that there is no need to use any strong-arm or, to be more precise, forcible methods to resolve matters associated with Crimea. We have enough economic levers and legal means of persuasion to maintain tranquillity and stability in this region. And throughout Ukraine.

The conflicts with the Crimean parliament can and will be "removed" within the field of law and not on the battlefield. None of the legitimate organs of authority in Crimea officially disputes the fact that the peninsula is an inalienable part of Ukraine. And this means that Ukrainian law prevails in situations that arise in the region. Incidentally, an unprecedented wave of crime and killings there was provoked by the attempt to introduce legal double standards, which immediately established in the offenders a sense of total license. So strong-arm pressure cannot be avoided here....

[TRUD] When and how will the Black Sea Fleet knot be unraveled? Does the question of the status of Sevastopol—a Russian hero-city—not merit separate attention?

[Kuchma] The legal status of Sevastopol is not at issue. The historical past is another matter. Sevastopol has indeed gone down in world history as a Russian hero-city, and it would be supremely stupid to dispute that. Historical status is changed not by politicians but by history itself.

You were right to point out that the fleet knot needs to be unraveled—in the past people tried to tighten the knot and then cut it. But a great deal is tied up in this knot, and the division of the Black Sea Fleet's ships is not the most tricky issue. As of this moment we have found suitable approaches to virtually all the components of the "knot." Everyone will be able to see that for themselves once our countries sign the treaty. Given political will on both sides.

As for Sevastopol, the only possible issue here is the conditions for the Russian Black Sea Fleet's use of certain naval infrastructure installations in the city. Ukraine does not rule out the possibility of the Russian Federation Navy's main base being temporarily sited at these installations.

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[TRUD] How does your model for the transition to the market differ from the Russian one?

[Kuchma] We have more common than individual features, although the latter also exist. We share more difficulties with Russia than we have differences. We have the same problems with financial stabilization, reorganization, and the transformation of forms of ownership. We share the fact that in many respects we picked other people's brains rather than working out our strategy together. Every republic of the former Union could not have its own strategy for the transition to the market. That is why this process is proceeding just as painfully for everyone.

What is more, the years that we wasted before launching reform are also taking their toll on our country. One of our mistakes was to disregard the specific conditions for the transformation of Ukraine's economy. In the old union division of labor the Ukrainian economy was given the role of manufacturing what was by and large an interim rather than an end product. These and other factors make it difficult to rapidly enter a self-regulating market.

Because there was no political will to adopt unpopular decisions we lingered too long over the initial phase of the transformations. We are now making adjustments.

[TRUD] Under whose jurisdiction do the local authorities come—yours or that of parliamentary speaker O. Moroz?

[Kuchma] You know, I am in favor of a strong, tough authority. The economic state of emergency and the transitional period necessitate strong, centralized government. There can be no market without elements of regulation, without state programs.

Under current legislation it is hard to clearly determine under whose jurisdiction the oblast council chairmen come. I reach more understanding with them through purely human contacts. By and large the state authority cannot be organized as it is now. Therefore I advocate the adoption of a law on authority, the creation of a rigid vertical executive. I utterly reject the "vertical" authority of the soviets.

[TRUD] Will you not nonetheless arrive at a federal-land system?

[Kuchma] I do not in principle rule out that possibility in the future. But hasty federalization would mean the breakdown of the state. This problem is now being studied by experts, several scientific collectives are working on it. Everything must be carefully weighed up and considered. We will look at their proposals. Haste is inadmissible here.

[TRUD] If your reform of authority is put on ice, are you prepared for a "referendum of confidence"?

[Kuchma] Absolutely. There will be none of the Russian way of resolving clashes with the parliament in our republic. But I am prepared to address the people and demonstrate my position. At the same time I am opening myself up to attack. I will be asking: Do you trust the president or not? Or should socialism be built with the Supreme Soviet once again in a separate Ukraine? There is no other option here.

[TRUD] To a certain extent you were assured of success in the elections by your avowed uncompromising position on corruption and the mafia. In your view are the voters' hopes coming true here? What in particular is happening with the Zvyahilskyy "case" and other topics of that kind?

[Kuchma] Edicts and a number of tough organizational measures have galvanized the law-enforcement organs' work. I will not hide the fact that I am not yet entirely satisfied with the results. The crime clear-up rate has increased, primarily when it comes to serious crimes. The number of criminal groups exposed is several times higher than the same period last year. Hundreds of particularly major attempted thefts, notably in the sphere of currency and credit, have been stopped. However, there has not as yet been a radical breakthrough in the war against the "fifth estate." The generally unfavorable situation in the economy, the corruption among managerial structures, and the lack of qualified cadres, particularly in the investigation sphere, are taking their toll.

Now a word about the Zvyahilskyy case. To be objective I would like to remind you that the investigation began under my predecessor, in May 1994. The General Prosecutor's Office is now completing the investigation, and once it is over everyone will be informed of the results.

The main point is that awareness of the need for a real "war" on the "fifth estate," which today poses a real threat to national security, is increasingly ripening in society. I have no intention of changing course, no matter what the opposition.

[TRUD] Do you feel any serious misgivings regarding the impoverishment of the bulk of the people and the worsening of the social "inflammation" of society?

[Kuchma] It causes me particular pain. The opportunities are still limited in this respect. Here is one example. The population pays on average $2 per cubic meter for gas and we buy it from Russia and Turkmenistan at $80. The deficit amounts to around $3 billion a year. Where is that money to come from? Previously the costs were borne by industry. Industry is "going through hell," and its output is becoming uncompetitive even on the CIS markets.

We have 16 million pensioners—out of a population of 52 million. These are the people with the least social protection, Social justice in Ukraine today should be targeted rather than "spread thin." It is a very grave matter...! Let us come to a common table and think about how to get the economy moving faster.

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I am not promising that we will start to lead a good life while I am president. But I do believe that in the time I have been allotted it will prove possible to halt the negative processes in the economy and the social sphere. Halt them and begin to move forward. Only let us agree that no one stands to gain if we and Russia alienate one another any more.

[TRUD] Does the press help or hinder you—the press which many politicians are not averse to blaming for their own miscalculations?

[Kuchma] Having independent mass media as a "counterbalance" to the authorities is a condition of mutual understanding in society and of democratization. Particularly when no real multiparty system yet exists. But the press in our republic is an equivocal thing: On the one hand it provides civilized coverage of events, and on the other it carries articles to order and services for various groups and interests. Some publications under economic pressure are willing to succumb to anyone as long as they pay up. That is most likely not their fault but the problem of the transitional crisis period.

[TRUD] Nationalism, the idea of national revival, and patriotism.... Do you see any dangers here?

[Kuchma] Concern for national ideas is fruitful if it coincides with what is known as enlightened patriotism. But I am ultimately opposed to blind nationalism. I said in Lvov that I am the president of Ukraine and not of the Ukrainian-speaking west or the predominantly Russian-speaking east. You cannot base policy solely on the national idea. The leading idea for me is the creation of a strong policy. To ensure that representatives of any nationality are at home here. And the Russian language should not feel alien. In principle there is no forcible Ukrainianization taking place now as there was before. I always repeat that you cannot force kindness....

[TRUD] On becoming president did you become happier or change in any way?

[Kuchma] I did not become any happier and I did not change. My old friends can confirm that.

[TRUD] Do you still have friends who do not bear the burden of high office?

[Kuchma] Yes, my real friends are still those I was working close to at the end of my education and at the beginning of my working life. If "friendship" depends on your position, that is not friendship, God forbid. I am often telephoned by people from Dnepropetrovsk's "Yuzhmash," particularly on Sundays. They drop by and visit. There is, of course, little time for informal contacts. I am also asked for assistance with everyday matters, health, etc. I try not to refuse.

[TRUD] What is your favorite food and drink?

[Kuchma] I am allergic to drink. But protocol demands that I sometimes have to "take one." If I have the choice I drink vodka. I like pelmeni—my wife is from the Urals. I love to eat dripping—it keeps up your energy....

[TRUD] What are the three main components of happiness that you would wish the TRUD reader?

[Kuchma] Happiness—that is tricky. So I would wish them the simplest and most important things: prosperity and a loving family, health, and a job that gives them satisfaction and provides them with enough money for the essentials. Only money that is earned honestly rather than "illegally" brings happiness. Earned income.

Kuchma Comments on Government No-Confidence Vote

LD2603160495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1431 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Mar 26 (Interfax - Ukraine)—The Ukrainian president has spoken out against debates in the Ukrainian parliament on the government report.

He told Interfax-Ukraine on Sunday [26 March] that "the parliament may show no-confidence to the government and remove it from office."

As it has become known to Interfax-Ukraine, the Ukrainian parliament intends to debate the item on giving a no-confidence vote to the government at the next plenary session.

"I will react calmly to the decision of no-confidence to the government," said Kuchma. "A new government structure is being considered today and the reshuffling will certainly take place."

The Ukrainian president is sure that the question was put on the agenda following the application for resignation by Prime Minister Vitaliy Masol, who was backed by the left-wing forces, he said.

Earlier Kuchma accepted the resignation of Vitaliy Masol and proposed the relevant document for the consideration of the parliament, which is to approve the resignation. First Deputy Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk was appointed acting prime minister late in February.

Council Fails To Reach Consensus on Crimean Decision

LD2403155895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1532 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Viktor Demidenko, Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev March 24 TASS—The Ukrainian parliament at its plenary meeting on Friday [24 March] failed to reach consensus when the question of the legitimacy of the Crimean parliament's dismissing the prime minister and the deputy prime minister of the

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Crimean Government was discussed. The deputies were not satisfied with the explanation of Ukrainian Justice Minister Vasly Onopenko.

A considerable number of deputies who spoke in the debates came out against the abrogation of the Crimean parliament's decision. Voting was without result. Not one of the proposals earned the majority of votes. The decision of the Crimean parliament on the dismissal of the prime minister and the deputy prime minister of the Crimean Government has thus remained valid.

Ukrainian Parliament Postpones Crimean Elections

LD2403171295 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1530 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kiev—On 24 March Ukraine's Parliament passed the law on elections of deputies and chairmen to Crimean autonomous republic local councils, postponing local elections in Crimea from 29 April—the date envisaged by the respective Crimean law—to 25 June 1995, to comply with the legislation of Ukraine. The law, passed by 249 votes to 15 with four abstentions, orders the Supreme Council of Ukraine committee for nation building, council activity and local self-government, and the committee for legal policy and legal and judicial reform to amend the Ukrainian law, bringing in electoral quotas to the deportees and, primarily, Crimean Tartars. [passage omitted]

The parliament further repealed the Supreme Council of Crimea resolution on compulsory military service by Republic of Crimea citizens. Under the latter, Crimeans could only serve on the territory of the autonomy.

Parliament, however, rejected drafts repealing the law of Crimea "On the Crimean Government" and the Supreme Council of Crimea resolution concerning the changes made in the government.

Crimea's Parliament was entitled to address the issue of no confidence in the government and elect a new prime minister, since the Ukrainian law does not rule on the formation of Crimea's cabinet, Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz told a news conference on 24 March. In outlawing the Crimean Constitution at the same time, the Ukrainian Parliament has been empowered to repeal the law of Crimea "On the government." A legal vacuum, that may appear if this happened, could only be filled by the head of executive power, which can be done by the president on his return from Japan, Moroz said.

UNIAN has already quoted unofficial sources as saying that the president has drawn up an edict resubordinating the Crimean Government to Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers. [passage omitted]

Crimea's Parliament has remained calm about the moves by the Ukrainian Parliament, as they may enable the situation in Crimea to improve, Volodymyr Klychnykov, Crimean Supreme Council deputy chairman told the Ukrainian Parliament on 24 March. The removal of the Crimean Government leadership, Anatoliy Franchuk and Andriy Senchenko [prime minister and his deputy], "is not a political action but a necessity that has been on the agenda for the past two months," he added.

Klychnykov proposed forming a joint parliamentary body "to assess the decisions taken by the Ukrainian Parliament on 17 March" and continue studying the situation in Crimea. He opposed the postponement of local elections on the peninsula.

Supreme Council Speaker on Situation in Crimea

LD2403174095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1658 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Viktor Demidenko, Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev March 24 TASS—Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament Oleksandr Moroz believes that the Supreme Soviet of the Crimea had the right to relieve of their duties the prime minister and the deputy prime minister of the government of the autonomous republic. He said at a press conference today: "After the Constitution of the Crimea was declared null and void, a legal vacuum was created. It turned out that the government of the republic is subordinated, on the one hand, to the president of Ukraine, and, on the other hand, to the Crimean Parliament."

According to Moroz, the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet could only repeal the Crimean Law on the Government today, but not cancel the parliamentary resolution of the autonomous republic. "The resolution of the Ukrainian Parliament would not have legal force anyway," he added. "Thus, the Crimean Parliament will be able to form its government, until corresponding amendments are made to the Ukrainian Constitution," Moroz stressed. In his opinion, the Ukrainian president, who is the head of executive authorities of the country, is the only one who could make some changes.

At the same time, he continued, "if the Crimean Supreme Soviet takes steps, which are at variance with the Ukrainian legislation, the parliament will take adequate measures, ... But our actions will be in the interests of the Crimean people."

Kiev Bars New Crimean Prime Minister From Office

LD2403180195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1744 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lev Ryabchikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol March 24 TASS—Ukrainian Interior Ministry officers today barred the door to the office of the Crimean prime minister and did

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not let the newly elected premier Anatoliy Drobotov and Parliament Speaker Sergey Tsekov enter.

"The office is under guard for the duration of Anatoliy Franchuk's absence," head of the Ukrainian Interior Ministry's Department for Crimea Vitaliy Kirichenko told ITAR-TASS. "Wait until he reports back for work and hand over everything in an appropriate manner. That will be proper. It is not quite decent to invade his office while Franchuk is away, I think".

Anatoliy Franchuk was hospitalised after the Crimean Parliament sacked him as prime minister on March 22. He told ITAR-TASS by telephone from the hospital today that he was going to return to his office on Monday after completing a course of treatment for pneumonia.

He said he was feeling better and the latest x-ray examination showed he had a reason to be. Anatoliy Franchuk made it clear that he would not obey the parliament decision on his resignation.

Supreme Council Admits Crimean Parliament's Legitimacy

LD2403212095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1834 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Mar 24 (Interfax - Ukraine)—The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet admits the legitimacy and authorities of the Crimean Parliament and suggests that the Crimean deputies continue their work on the autonomy's constitution, Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Chairman Oleksandr Moroz told a press conference in Kiev Friday [24 March].

At the same time, if the Crimean Parliament's activities run counter to Ukrainian law, "a whole complex of measures, envisaged by the Ukrainian constitution", will be taken towards them, stated Moroz.

Tsekov: Kiev Acts Dictated by Prevalence in Force

LD2403205695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1821 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SIMFEROPOL, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Crimean Parliamentary Chairman Serhey Tsekov told Interfax Friday that the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet had committed "another illegal decision dictated by prevalence in force."

According to Tsekov, "the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet leadership is possessed by emotions, common sense is lacking in its actions."

Tsekov emphasized that under the present circumstances the Crimean parliament will not call on Crimean citizens to commit violent actions because "we clearly realize that the conflict will take place on the territory of Crimea, where we do not want it to."

Tsekov said Simferopol "will seek the protection of the world community." He stressed that the West had been recently paying too much attention to Ukraine, and "the information on what Ukraine allows itself with respect to Crimea will prove very useful."

Meanwhile, sources in the Crimean parliament told Interfax that it will discuss the abolition of the peninsula's constitution and a number of laws. In addition, the parliament will consider the decisions on no confidence in the former Crimean prime minister and deputy prime minister of March 22 and to schedule the local elections on the peninsula for April 29.

Tsekov Says New Crimean Government At Work

LD2503111895 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1003 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Simferopol—"I consider the government crisis in Crimea overcome and the government of Anatoliy Drobotov is at work," Crimean parliament speaker Serhiy Tsekov has told UNIAN. Commenting on his participation in a Crimean government meeting on 25 March, Serhiy Tsekov added: "The executive branch of power under the present conditions of an economic crisis has a lot to cope with right now, and what is most important today, in my view, is not to interfere in the government's work."

At present, there are two vacancies of deputy prime ministers and one of the agriculture minister in the Crimean government, with Crimean Prime Minister Anatoliy Drobotov very soon to nominate his candidacies for these posts at the session, the meeting heard. There also was a discussion of further activities of the Crimean government.

Premier Drobotov Wants To Center on Economy

LD2503131995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1240 GMT 25 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lev Ryabchikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol March 25 TASS—Most Crimean cabinet members continue to work, and the formation of the new government will be completed in two or three weeks, new Premier Anatoliy Drobotov said at a special government meeting this Saturday [25 March].

He was appointed to this post by parliament of this autonomous republic, a constituent part of Ukraine. "We agreed not to participate in political strife and concentrate only on the economy," Drobotov stressed.

Following the meeting, cabinet members went to the Crimean parliament where a working conference attended by Crimean parliament speaker Sergey Tsekov was held. "The government crisis in the Crimea (eds: peninsula is predominantly populated by ethnic Russians) is over," he said after the conference. "Nobody must meddle in its work."

The Crimean parliament sacked former Premier Anatoliy Franchuk on March 22. Many legislators heavily

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panned him before sacking. The decision was taken following the cancellation by the Ukrainian parliament of the Crimean Constitution and abolition of the presidency.

Kiev claims that Franchuk was dismissed illegally.

Foreign Ministry on Russian Position on Crimea

LD2403212895 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Statement by Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry Press Center—announcer-read]

[FBIS Translated Text] The decisions by the State Duma of the Russian Federation's Federal Assembly of 22 March, which were adopted in connection with examination by the Ukrainian Supreme Council on 17 March of the issue of the implementation of its resolution on the legal and political situation in the autonomous Crimean republic, have evoked astonishment in Ukraine.

In the course of relations with the Russian Federation, Ukraine has consistently proceeded from and proceeds to the principles of good-neighborliness, mutual respect, and nonintervention in internal affairs. Ukraine's devotion to political and constitutional methods when settling issues of its internal state life has been highly assessed by the international community.

The State Duma's statement that the Ukrainian Supreme Council's decisions—we quote—cannot but be reflected in the State Duma's discussions of all of the problems of the Russian-Ukrainian talks, including the issues of restructuring Ukraine's debts, division of the Black Sea Fleet, and the status of its main base, the town of Sevastopol—end of quote—cannot be assessed as other than a threat to block the process of Ukrainian-Russian relations by means of political pressure, and an attempt to cast doubt on the obligations assumed by Russia in the memorandum on guarantees of Ukraine's security in connection with its accession to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of 5 December 1994.

The formulation of the State Duma's resolution in the part concerning Sevastopol is another attempt to cast doubt on the status of Sevastopol as an inalienable part of Ukraine. This cannot be interpreted as other than interference in Ukraine's internal affairs, and as an unfriendly act.

It evokes surprise that the Duma adopted the said decisions at a time when the state delegations of Ukraine and Russia have been consistently and persistently endeavoring to find mutually acceptable ways of resolving the complex problems, which the two countries inherited from the former USSR, including the Black Sea Fleet problems. The introduction of additional tension in the sphere around the negotiating process will hardly make this process more efficient, and in the end does not correspond to the long-term interests of either Ukraine or Russia.

This was an account of the statement by the Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry press center.

Meshkov Thanks Russia's State Duma For Support

LD2503145795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1435 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SIMFEROPOL, Mar 25 (Interfax)—Yuriy Meshkov, whom Kiev stripped of presidency, has thanked Russia's State Duma for supporting the people of the Crimea in the wake of the Ukrainian parliament's decision to abolish the Crimean Constitution and annul the post of president in the autonomous republic.

In a letter addressed to the State Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin, Meshkov said that the people of the Crimea are grateful to Russia's State Duma for its resolution concerning the Crimea.

On behalf of the Crimean people Meshkov urged Rybkin "not to endorse the lawlessness which destroys the Crimean people's will and their inalienable right to settle the issue of their state structure on their own."

He said he hopes that "the Crimean Republic represented by its lawful authorities will receive the right to take part in talks between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and express the outlook of the Crimean people."

Meshkov: Ukraine Set To Build Unitary State

LD2503150195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1435 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mar 25 (Interfax)— Ukraine has taken the path toward a unitary state to be illegally built by force. That's the view of Yuriy Meshkov, whom Kiev dismissed as Crimea's president.

In an interview with Interfax Saturday [25 March], he did not rule out that the on Crimea's parliament might be quashed soon and Crimea may turn into an mundane region of Ukraine.

Meshkov is convinced that "only a coordinated position of the president, parliament, and people of Crimea" can halt this process. He also counts on moral and political support from Russia, which, in his opinion, "has special commitments to safeguarding the rights of ethnic Russians in Crimea."

Former Crimean Premier To Appeal Against Dismissal

LD2503150295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1435 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, Mar 25 (INTERFAX)—The former Crimean Prime Minister Anatoliy

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Franchuk intends to appeal against the Crimean parliament's decision to dismiss him through a court of law. This was announced in the parliament lobby on Saturday.

As a deputy said, Franchuk believes that the parliament violated labor legislation, when it decided to dismiss him during his sick leave.

Another deputy, Mikhail Bakharev, said at the session: Franchuk told him that he will leave the hospital in a week's time and resume his work as the prime minister.

Justice Minister: Firing of Crimean Leaders Illegal

WS2703105895 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0105 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 26—The decision by the Crimean Parliament to dump Prime Minister Anatoliy Franchuk and First Deputy Prime Minister Andriy Senchenko breaks current Ukrainian law, Justice Minister Vasyl Onopenko said Sunday [26 March].

In an interview with INTELNEWS, Onopenko said the decision is to be abolished immediately. "Since the Parliament has not resorted to this measure, President Leonid Kuchma should act as the initiator of safeguards for the current legally-elected Crimean government. Crimean government law is to be abolished. This will allow the President to have legal leverage to appoint the executive powers in Crimea independently."

The situation in which two governments—one accountable to Crimean legislation and the other to Ukrainian law—exist in the Autonomous Republic is inadmissible, he said.

Moroz Affirms Crimean Move as Domestic Affair

WS2703074595 Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 21 Mar 95 p 3

["Exclusive" interview with Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz by Georgiy Chernomorskiy; place and date not given: "There Is Not Enough Room in Crimea for Two Presidents. Where Is the Crimean Peninsula Drifting?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

[Chernomorskiy] **You mentioned the organization of power. In your opinion, what particular form should this power take? What will it look like in Ukraine? Will it be a parliamentary or a presidential republic? To what extent are such symbiotic titles—parliamentary-presidential, or, on the contrary, presidential- parliamentary—legal? You see, you must agree that only one individual can be at the helm of the ship.**

[Moroz] I personally stand for a parliamentary republic, however, when a constitution is passed, the people will decide what form power in Ukraine will take. Regarding the number—one, two, or three—of individuals at the helm, this question cannot be formulated in such a way.

[Chernomorskiy] **Only one individual, however, is at the helm of the ship.**

[Moroz] On all "ships," where there is order, classic parliamentary-presidential formulas are used. All of democratic Europe—Germany, Switzerland, France...—is ruled by parliamentary methods.

[Chernomorskiy] **France is a presidential Republic.**

[Moroz] But the role of parliament is sufficiently important there. Finally, we come to the second part of your question. I refer to—as you kindly put it—"symbiotic titles," such as a parliamentary-presidential republic, or the other way around....

Symbiosis is not a purely biological term. It could be used in political life as well. How many people must be at the helm of the ship? Why, every individual must have their own helm. There will be enough power for each branch. The point is how to organize this power, how to provide for the implementation of constitutional norms. Naturally, the Supreme Council—in collaboration with the president—will resolve these issues for the welfare of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

[Chernomorskiy] **You have a reputation as an upholder of strict observance of Supreme Council regulations. Strictly speaking, God himself ordered the Supreme Council chairman to do this. On Friday [17 March], many television viewers, however, could have gotten the impression that these regulations were violated. A serious decision on Crimea was discussed, however, commissions not only failed to discuss one of the decrees (the one that included five tenets), but, as they put it, the decree was adopted in an oral vote, or, as athletes say, "on sight."** [sentence as published]

[Moroz] On Friday, I stated from the Supreme Council rostrum that there will always be such experts who, referring to one or another tenet of the regulations, could disrupt the discussion of any critical issue. The point is that no other issue was discussed in such great detail as the Crimean issue. There were no "blank spaces" for the deputies with regard to this issue. But in the process of discussion, additional issues that required normative regulations emerged. Since lawmakers did not have particular difficulties here and adopted fruitful decisions (two laws, four decrees in the first reading, and the amendment to the Constitution), I think it is wrong to qualify this as the violation of the law. [passage omitted]

[Chernomorskiy] **In my opinion, this sounds strange. Our legislature has not adopted a new constitution for over five years, yet we expect such speed on the part of Crimean deputies.**

[Moroz] There is nothing strange about this. Strictly speaking, the constitution on the peninsula is virtually

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ready. It should only be brought in line with the "Primary Law of Ukraine." Of course, when a new constitution is passed, Crimean lawmakers will again have to work, nothing can be done about this, because life has not come to a standstill.

[Chernomorskiy] **Life, indeed, is not at a standstill and it often surprises us. Has the Ukrainian Supreme Council assessed potential situations connected with the repeal of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea? What kind of domestic response do you expect?**

[Moroz] I have already received specific reports. Residents of the peninsula perceived differently both the Ukrainian Supreme Council's decision to repeal their Constitution, as well as the Crimean Supreme Council's decision to appeal to the world community. But we draft laws not for particular categories of people, but for all of Ukraine's residents—for the entire country. Eventually, it is time to understand that Crimea is not a ship without a captain or an iceberg that can drift in any direction. Crimea is an integral part of Ukraine.

We rely on our citizens' adherence to the law, to their understanding of the danger of the situation that was triggered by the absence of a single legal area. Is it so difficult to imagine what a Crimean resident feels when they act according to one legal norm while they are held accountable for their activities according to another (also legal) norm.

Regarding the abolishment of the presidency in the Autonomous Republic, this will do a lot of good. The executive branch does not need dual structures. The Autonomous Republic has a legislature and a government. If they achieve harmony in their work, everything will be all right. Even though Ukraine is a great state, there will not be enough room for two presidents there.

[Chernomorskiy] **Yes, everything is as you say. But we do not live in outer space. How will the recent Supreme Council action effect our relations with the northern neighbor?**

[Moroz] I will repeat that the Crimean issue is our domestic affair. Regarding our relations with Russia, certain difficulties could actually emerge, because there are adversaries in Russia to Ukraine's genuine independence. I had a comprehensive discussion with the deputy chairman of the Russian State Duma today. We will discuss this issue with [Russian State Duma Chairman] Ivan Rybkin in the immediate future. I would like to hope that our Russian colleagues will thoroughly consider the reasons that led to the Ukrainian Supreme Council's repeal of the Crimean Constitution. Eventually, there are quite a few politicians in Russia who understand perfectly well that the Crimean issue is a domestic affair of Ukraine.

Economic Issues

'Secret Report' on Imminent Chernobyl Disaster 'Suppressed'

LD2603101095 London THE OBSERVER in English 26 Mar 95 p 1

["Exclusive" article by Polly Ghazi and Robin McKie: "West Faces New Radiation Threat: Report is Suppressed as Scientists Warn That Second Chernobyl Reactor Risks Meltdown"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A SECOND catastrophic explosion at the Chernobyl's nuclear plant in Ukraine could happen "at any time", Western scientists have warned after being given unprecedented access to the site.

In a secret report, obtained by The Observer, they say pillars supporting the damaged reactor building are in imminent danger of bursting.

Their collapse could send debris crashing through the concrete sarcophagus built round the irradiated, burnt-out remains of Chernobyl's Reactor number 4; or rubble could plunge into Reactor 3 immediately next to it which is still fully operational, triggering another core meltdown. Either way, it is likely that another plume of highly radioactive dust would blast out into the atmosphere over Europe.

But the document is being suppressed by European Commission officials who are still battling with Ukrainian politicians over the price-tag for a Chernobyl clean-up. Western governments, who fear another bout of contamination, want the whole plant to be shut immediately, a view underlined by the scientists—who say that every day's delay increases the risk of disaster. But Ukraine is refusing until it gets Western cash and expertise to help build replacements.

The commission funded the report because of worries that the reactor's sarcophagus was unsafe. But when the full horror of its condition was uncovered, officials tried to force the engineers and scientists to withdraw a whole chapter.

Two weeks ago, the report's findings were presented to a peer group of international experts sworn to secrecy. So alarming were the conclusions that press conferences scheduled for Paris and London last Monday were abruptly cancelled.

"It's a scandal that this is being shrouded in secrecy when the safety of Europe's public is at risk," said a source near the investigating team. "This report may be put on the shelf and forgotten."

The report states that Chernobyl teeters on the brink of a calamity like the one that left Europe irradiated nine years ago, and the impact of which lingers today. Many highland areas are still irradiated from the 1986 accident; experts accept thousands of cancers will result. Last

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week, doctors reported "a substantial and continuing increase" in thyroid cancers in children in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

The Western team—drawn from six French, German, and British companies, including AEA Technology (the commercial arm of the UK Atomic Energy Authority) and Taylor Woodrow—report that there are 740,000 cubic metres of lethally contaminated debris inside the concrete sarcophagus, 10 times more than previously thought, and confirm that the sarcophagus is leaking and could soon collapse. They say cleaning up Chernobyl will take at least 100 years.

Worst of all, though, the team discovered that a building called Block B. which contains ducts, pipes and servicing equipment for Reactors 3 and 4, could collapse at any moment. The building runs between the two reactors, which should lean against it, providing structural support.

But with the explosion of Reactor 4 half the support was removed, putting the building under severe structural strain. The team found that pillars at its base are bearing loads five times their design limits and could burst "at any time."

If so, Block B would either collapse over the sarcophagus, breaking its already weakened roof beams and releasing its massive store of contaminated debris; alternatively, the report warns, the building would fall over into the still-operational Reactor 3.

Pipes carrying reactor coolant run along the wall it shares with Block B, and would be ruptured, triggering a loss of coolant. Dropping control rods would probably prevent a meltdown, though there there would still be a significant release of radioactivity.

"That's the lesser problem," said one expert on Chernobyl type reactors. "If the collapsing debris struck the reactor's refuelling gantry, it would dislodge it and send it crashing through the thin plate covering the core." That would probably cause a partial meltdown.

Paper's Report on Chernobyl Not Confirmed

LD2703111295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1053 GMT 27 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ruslan Knyazev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—Experts of the European Union, after studying the technical state of the Chernobyl nuclear plant did not express serious concern to Ukrainian specialists that the third reactor of the station may deteriorate. Vadim Grischenko, deputy chief of the Ukrainian Administration of Nuclear Regulation, said this on Monday [27 March].

Commenting in a telephone conversation with ITAR-TASS on a statement of the London newspaper OBSERVER which asserted, with a reference to a secret reports of the European Union, that the presently operating third reactor of the Chernobyl nuclear plant can explode "at any time", Grishchenko said he had not heard of any complaints about the technological state of the third reactor.

At the same time he did not deny what he described as small leakage of radiation from the cracks in the sarcophagus of the fourth reactor. It is precisely because of the concern that the sarcophagus may be destroyed that it was decided to build another sarcophagus over the first one. Its draft is prepared by specialists of the European Union. The presentation of the feasibility report of this project was held on March 17 in Kiev on behalf of the alliance of several Western companies, Moscow's Kurchatov Institute and Ukrainian organisations. The implementation of the project is to ensure turning the Chernobyl nuclear plant into an ecologically-safe system.

Official Denies Risk of Explosion

LD2603163895 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The third unit of the Chernobyl AES [nuclear electric power station] could explode at any minute. That is the conclusion drawn by experts from the European Union. According to their information, it is under huge stress, exceeding the capacity for which it was designed fivefold. This is because the fourth unit was put out of action after the disaster in April 1986.

In addition, radioactive substances are continuing to leak out through the numerous cracks in the power unit's sarcophagus. But the duty officer at the Ukrainian Civil Defense Headquarters told our correspondent in an interview that the Chernobyl plant is working as normal.

[Begin unidentified duty officer recording] I have no information of the sort. There has been no inspection. The unit is working perfectly normally. There is absolutely no information about any rise in the level of radiation or any other cataclysms. [end recording]

Khmelnitskaya Nuclear Power Plant Experiences Minor Leak

LD2503071995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0703 GMT 25 Mar 95

[By UKRINFORM News Agency for TASS]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Neteshin March 25—A minor radiation leak occurred on March 23 in a five square metre closed zone of a reactor of the Khmelnitskaya nuclear power plant, the plant's public relations office reported late on Friday [24 March].

The leak has been localised, and decontamination is in progress. The plant's spokesman said the personnel has not been exposed to radiation, and there is no threat to the plant's safety.

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U.S. Firm Tipped To Win Nuclear Fuel Bid

MK2503105095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 25 Mar 95 p 5

[Report by Viktor Zubanyuk in the "Ukraine Nuclear Problems" column: "Kiev Wants To Attract Private Investments in the Nuclear Power Industry"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the run-up to a closed tender for the right to develop a nuclear fuel production plant project, announced by the Ukraine State Committee for Nuclear Energy Uses, reports began appearing in the Ukraine press which reflect the complex character of relations between companies taking part in the tender. Thus, the U.S. firm Westinghouse, which according to experts has the best chances for victory, is being charged with corruption and insufficient safety of its projects. Representatives of the Ukraine State Atomic Energy Committee have not come forward with any official comments.

The question about building a nuclear fuel production plant is more political than economic. All the fuel necessary for nuclear power stations Ukraine either buys or gets from Russia by way of compensation for the dismantled and evacuated nuclear weapons. This fuel costs Ukraine $300 million a year. The Ukraine State Atomic Energy Committee justly reasoned that the state treasury is incapable of bearing such a burden and that it will be cheaper to for the country to produce its own fuel in any event. The Ukraine Government regards the creation of a national nuclear fuel cycle as a means of stabilizing the country's nuclear energy complex. Just how critical it is for the republic can be seen from the fact that 15 units of Ukraine nuclear power stations in winter generate up to 45 percent of aggregate electrical power. The energy generated by nuclear power stations so far is the cheapest. The situation, however, is aggravated by a worsening nonpayments problem, as a result of which the financing of a number of programs is being thwarted, including those designed to enhance nuclear power station safety. There is a shortage not only of fuel but also of equipment and spare parts. Wages are not high enough, either: As a result, personnel leave for Russia (8,500 people in the past two years). Ukraine, however, has preserved advanced technology of extracting and processing uranium and zirconium: The stocks of these materials, Mikhail Pavlovskiy, head of the Supreme Council Nuclear Policy Commission said recently, will last for another 150 years. Which keeps alive the hope that the stabilization program will be implemented: The time frame for its execution (with sufficient financing) is estimated at five to seven years, and its cost at approximately $1.2 billion. These figures are cited in the press when the cost of the future nuclear fuel producing plant is assessed.

There are some nuances, however: As a nonnuclear state, Ukraine has no right to create a full nuclear fuel production cycle because this presupposes the capability to produce fuel also for nuclear weapons. Ukraine's intention to create a closed nuclear fuel production cycle has stirred a controversy in Western countries which are already extremely concerned over Kiev's unwillingness to close down the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station. In this connection the State Atomic Energy Committee thought is necessary to assure that Ukraine has no, and is not planning to develop any, programs of enriching uranium and processing nuclear fuel involving uranium and plutonium extraction (this technology is officially possessed only by Russia, the United States, Great Britain, France, and China). The programs for Western assistance in modernizing its nuclear engineering, which have been promised to Ukraine, so far exist only on paper. Kiev would apparently like the international community to take the same line toward Ukraine's nuclear problems as in the case of the DPRK. The West, however, is so far in no rush to cough up money to modernize Ukraine nuclear installations. So, under such circumstances, the search for private investors appears to be quite justified.

According to Oleksandr Zenyuk, representative of the State Atomic Energy Committee, the tender is open to any firms having a direct relation to nuclear power engineering (there are several dozen in the world). Tender notices have so far been sent to four firms: Westinghouse, ABB (both United States), a French-German consortium, and the Russian TVEL concern. Other participants in the tender could emerge in its process.

Although the tender has not been announced officially yet, competition is in full swing, with the mass media being widely used for the purpose. One newspaper publication has charged Westinghouse with an insufficient safety of its projects as well as with bribing officials capable of affecting the outcome of the tender (no bribe sums have been cited). Philip Evison, company representative in Kiev, stated immediately that his firm has a 100-year old reputation in the world and does not need to pay off anybody. According to him, Westinghouse licenses have been acquired by such respected firms as Siemens and Mitsubishi, and this speaks for itself. Moreover, the company charter categorically forbids paying anyone, except in officially stipulated cases. Evison does not intend to issue any denials, believing that this case is not worth getting involved with the press.

Be that as it may, Westinghouse has proved to be the first to reserve a niche in the Ukraine nuclear business, which promises to become lucrative over time. In association with the well known Kharkov enterprise Khartron, which used to produce the electronic stuffing for Soviet strategic missiles, the company has set up a joint venture, Vestron. It will engage in production, under U.S. technology, of monitoring systems both for nuclear power stations and for other types of electrical power stations, while the enterprise plans include entering foreign markets, using Westinghouse's extensive experience. Furthermore, the company intends to create a

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system of servicing Ukraine electrical power stations, to promote energy-saving technology, and generally to expand its activity in Ukraine. Asked what helps it to overtake competitors, the company vice president says simply: "We are better."

Specialists Design New Multipurpose Mini-Aircraft

AU2403133795 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 22 Mar 95 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Even America Would Buy an Aircraft of Ours Such as This"]

[FBIS Translated Text] From business trips to struggling against poachers—these are some of the uses for the mini-aircraft designed by Kharkiv specialists. According to experts, the KhAI-70 meets the most stringent requirements. The aircraft may accommodate four persons, including the pilot. For the first time ever, the designers have managed to create an effective system of rescuing the passengers [efektyvna systema poryatunku pasazhyriv], something that has always been a vulnerable point in this class of aircraft. The question of manufacturing mini-aircraft still remains open. Is nobody interested in this?

Russian Ministry 'Not Satisfied' With Gas Debt Agreement

WS2703105995 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0105 GMT 27 Mar 95

["Special to INTELNEWS" by Viktor Zubaniuk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 25—The leadership of Russia's Fuel and Energy Ministry is not satisfied with the results of the negotiations between the Ukrainian government and GazProm, the Russian natural gas company, concerning the restructuring of Ukraine's gas debt.

Russia's Fuel and Energy Ministry leadership may step forward with an initiative to force their government to reconsider the agreements.

A number of Russian Fuel and Energy Ministry experts think that the agreement signed on March 20 in Kiev, during the visit of Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets, directly contradicts earlier agreements concluded in February.

The March 20 agreement temporarily forgave $1.4 billion of the total Ukrainian debt of $1.5 billion —giving Ukraine 12 years to pay.

A source in Ukraine's State Petroleum and Gas Industry Committee, wishing to remain anonymous, said that "although some forces in Russia are going to come out against the fulfillment of the agreement signed on March 20, there is a greater chance that this reaction will not succeed."

According to the source, many of the GazProm experts feel that their company was forced to accept the deal either because it "became a hostage of some political game" or the Ukrainian side managed to convince the Russians that they would not be able in any case to meet earlier terms of payment.

According to the minutes of the Ukrainian-Russian negotiations concluded in February, Ukraine promised to pay in full its $1.5 billion gas debt by the shipment of material-technical resources ($500 million), by buying and building housing for Russian gas workers ($100 million) and by a debt restructuring calling for the creation of $500 million in Ukrainian government paper. The remaining $400 million was to be paid in freely convertible currency.

The Russians are also greatly interested in leveraging their debt in order to get a piece of Ukrainian enterprises to be privatized in the near future.

"The cancellation of Ukraine's gas debt is a matter for the distant future. Ukraine is just unable to solve this problem today. That is why the (Russian) gas industry leadership neglected the pie in the sky—repayment of the debt— in order to get quite a real reward—shares of Ukrainian enterprises with a big future",—said an official of Ukraine's State Petroleum and Gas Industry Committee.

'Unwise' Exports of Ferrous Metals Discussed

WS2703112095 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0840 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Coordinating Committee for Fighting Crime and Corruption, which is a body immediately reportable to the president of Ukraine, held a session behind closed doors on Thursday, March 23, specifically to discuss the status of observance of Ukraine's legislation in the area of exporting ferrous metals which are considered to be Ukraine's major asset and source of foreign currency earnings, as well as a most lucrative field for shady dealers and embezzlers.

As UKRINFORM learned from customarily reliable sources, Valeriy Malikov, chief of the Security Service, made a major report, in which he cited quite a few cases of the state suffering tremendous losses through unwise and unprofitable exports of ferrous metals by importers who are often unreliable partners in terms of their commercial integrity.

Mr. Malikov reportedly stated such foreign partners' aggregate indebtedness to Ukrainian ferrous metal exporters at $86 million plus sizable sums in other foreign currencies.

Minister Orders Shutdown of 16 Donetsk Mines

WS2703112595 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0834 GMT 27 Mar 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukrainian Minister of Coal Industry Viktor Poltavets has ordered the liquidation of unprofitable coal enterprises of the Donbass region. Among these are 15 underground coal mines and one surface coal mine. In 1994, they delivered only 1.4 tonnes [as received] of coal at the prime cost of 4 to 6 million karbovantsi per tonne. The loss caused to the coal sector by these enterprises is estimated to be over 2 trillion karbovantsi. The managers of the coal mines which are to be closed are required to submit welfare programs for the employment of dismissed workers.

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Belarus

Disarmament Discussed With NATO Experts

WS2703102195 Minsk B ELAPAN in English 1707 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The three-day international seminar "Demilitarization and Disarmament in Transition: Socio-Economic Consequences" closed in Minsk on March 24. The seminar was attended by experts from a number of member-states of NATO and the North-Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).

As the director of the NATO Economic Department Daniel George declared at the press conference on the results of the seminar, in spite of the fact that the West realizes the complexity of the process of disarmament in the period of economic reformation in Belarus, nevertheless this country should hardly expect to receive financial support from the West. According to him, "one should not humiliate the country which is not referred to the countries of the fourth world by paltry doles". In his opinion, the best way out lies in the financing of disarmament programmes from the national budget as well as the using of the experience of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, which are carrying out programmes in the field of disarmament.

In the opinion of the Belarusian deputy foreign minister Andrey Sannikaw, the situation in Belarus is a striking illustration of the problems that may occur in the process of demilitarization and disarmament.

Unfortunately the participants of the seminar displayed no reaction to the Belarusian President's declaration about the suspension of arms destruction under the CFE [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe] Treaty. According to Mr. Sannikaw, this point was not discussed at the seminar. In the opinion of Mr. George, its participants had no right to assess such declarations of the head of the Belarusian state.

The aim of the seminar was to discuss the economic aspects of the process of demilitarization on the example of some countries and enterprises engaged in disarmament. Particular consideration was given to defence conversion. Mr. George pointed out that favourable conditions should be created for state and private structures capable of investing money in conversion programmes. He thinks that not only the "political will" but also money are necessary for the successful realization of demilitarization. And money may be made by carrying out various programmes, including in defence conversion.

The participants of the seminar also dwelt on programmes aimed at the social protection of the population.

Government Consults World Bank on Reforms

WS2703081595 Minsk RESPUBLIKA in Russian 22 Mar 95 p 5

[Report by Ivan Lemeshewski: "World Bank Gives 'Go-Ahead' for Reforms"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The world community's confidence in a country is determined by many factors. It very much depends on the level of the completeness and reliability of information about the country's socioeconomic situation.**

The World Bank (or more precisely, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) prefers to receive this information first-hand. Its reputation and billions [currency not specified] in credits are obliging. Therefore, in the course of consultations between the Belarusian Cabinet of Ministers and a World Bank mission held on 16-17 March, issues concerning the stabilization and development of the Belarusian economy, as well as the possibility of further cooperation were discussed first.

It should be admitted that the world community has recently displayed an increasing understanding of our unique difficulties and problems. It is no secret that until recently Belarus was, in many respects, lagging behind other countries in conducting economic reforms. Every cloud has a silver lining, however: This allowed us to avoid a number of mistakes committed by other countries. Systemization of experience accumulated by a number of Central and East European countries shows that not only the pace of transforming an outdated economy, but also the results of the transformation are important. A nation expects that reformers will improve the situation, and in the short run reforms only exacerbate it. The situation is uneasy. Therefore, the currently required minimum is to avoid cliches and pay more attention to our starting conditions.

Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir presented an unabridged analysis of the current socioeconomic situation during the first day of the meeting. At the first stage (September-December) of the implementation of a program for urgent measures, the main target indexes were as follows:

	Expected	Actual
Inflation rate (December, percent)	10-11	31.3
Devaluation of the Belarusian ruble (December, percent)	9	24.1
Trade balance deficit (as percent of GDP—Statistics Ministry data)	12	1
Credit security	74	45

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	Expected	Actual
Budget deficit (as percent of annual GDP)	5.6	3.5
Decline in industrial production	5-6	4.3
(percent change from previous year)	2.5	2.1
Unemployment rate (December, percent)		

The results achieved during the first stage should not be assessed unequivocally. Given all the failures, it could still be said that, in general, the first stage has been completed, even though many radical measures have been taken not simultaneously, and often even formally. The budgetary and credit-financial policy has been more reasonable. The stabilization of the Belarusian ruble's exchange rate is met with no less criticism than its previous decline. Nevertheless, there is an understanding that the financial stabilization is the required beginning. To consolidate this positive trend, it is essential to persistently implement an entire range of measures envisioned in the program.

The current budget is being met under difficult circumstances. This makes it impossible to fundamentally alter the taxation burden (in 1994—30 percent of GDP, in 1995—29.5 percent of GDP, and according to the program—22 percent of GDP). There is a need to develop paid services in health care and education in a more bold manner. It is also clear that the harsh monetary-credit policy should be accompanied by the development of a market-like environment and competition, an improvement in a mechanism for state regulation over incomes, and the arrangement of enterprises' finances.

Let us look at inflation. Demand inflation [inflatsiya sprosa] has been everyone's center of attention for a long period of time. It primarily has an "monetary" origin. This requires that all factors effecting the highly liquid money supply, as well as the effect of multiplication of credit resources [effekt multiplikatora kreditnykh resursov] be taken into account. Demand inflation, however is currently increasingly often accompanied by "supply inflation" [inflatsiya predlozheniya]. A decline in production, the producer's intentions to burden the consumer with high costs and increasing prices—which preserves our regular level of consumption accompanied by hidden unemployment—and "independent" increases in the first-grade tariff net, carried out regardless of economic possibilities, are the reasons behind the current inflation rate.

It is also clear that fundamental failures are caused by the liberal pricing policy, which pleases not only the IMF but also our domestic monopolists. Given the lack of competition, the latter ceaselessly generate price hikes. Concealing their inefficient management, they impose their inflationary tax on everyone else. Freeing of purchase prices for agricultural products is not a free pricing policy either. On our domestic market, high costs are not curbed by competition, and this may bring about a situation in which our prices would exceed world levels. In general, it is clear that reform of the "command economy" does not always correspond with traditional patterns of economic liberalism. The participants in the meeting thoroughly examined various aspects to the introduction of a mechanism for declaring insolvent enterprises bankrupt. Bazil Kavalski, director of the World Bank Fourth Department, jocularly recommended that the Belarusian prime minister firmly lock the door, through which bankrupt managers are coming to him to beg for state assistance. There are grounds to believe that Mikhail Chyhir has already had an opportunity to take back his words. At that time, however, he responded in the following way: Assistance will only be granted to enterprises able to quickly improve their financial situation. There is no other option.

In the course of discussions, the Cabinet of Ministers clarified its position on the enlivenment of privatization envisioned in the well-known presidential edict issued on 3 March. The World Bank experts welcomed the government's intentions to relieve enterprises of the burden of maintaining welfare facilities, and to apply a balanced approach to increases in tariffs for municipal services.

A "dialectic unity" was also reached with regard to an assessment of various options for reforming agrarian relations. At the initiative of Christopher Willoby [name as transliterated], the participants discussed the corresponding experience of Hungary, the Czech Republic, and [the former] East Germany. Employment, exports and imports of food, entities subject to land privatization, forms of management, and the preservation of infrastructure are among other issues which currently determine the essence of the "green revolution."

While analyzing structural achievements, the World Bank experts particularly emphasized the problem of preserving resources. The Belarusian side reacted quite skeptically to the idea of recording mutual demands between economic entities. As a matter of fact, the proposal that the World Bank directly participate in this "financial marathon," voiced by National Bank Chairman Stanislaw Bahdankevich, also went unheeded.

World Bank Executive Director Walter Rill [name as transliterated] attempted to draw the participants attention not only to the special advantages of projects

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"bringing returns in hard currency," but also to the advantages of "good" projects consolidating the viability of our national economy. Following this, the World Bank experts began listing specific proposals concerning the World Bank's participation in granting loans to carry out such projects. So, there is a need to thoroughly reconstruct the Belarusian fuel and power engineering industry, and a corresponding prognosis was drafted with the direct participation of World Bank specialists. Additionally, there has been the positive experience from the reconstruction of the Orsha thermal-electric power plant. There is also a vast area of operations for a special agency to grant loans to private business.

The issue of to what degree the World Bank's rules and norms will make it possible for it to diversify its activities in Belarus was discussed in detail during a meeting between the World Bank mission and the Belarusian president.

Hryb on Constitution, Role in Nation Building

WS2703075095 Minsk NARODNAYA GAZETA in Belarusian 14 Mar 95 p 1

[Article by Supreme Soviet Chairman Myacheslaw Hryb: "The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus Is a Basis for the Creation of a Sovereign and Law-Governed State"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A year ago we adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, which declared our state as unified, democratic, social, and law-governed. It may seem that one year is an insignificant period in the history of a nation. For the Republic of Belarus, however, both the very adoption of the Constitution and the subsequent period of time have marked, legally and actually, a new historical era in Belarusian statehood.

The adopted Constitution has, for the first time, legally approved the Republic of Belarus in its full entirety as a sovereign state based on the idea of an independent nation. The Constitution became the most important step on the path toward the creation of a law-governed state, in which the safeguarding of human rights and freedoms is the priority direction in the activities of all state bodies.

The path of our state toward national sovereignty was not easy. Life today also poses many problems of a diverse nature. Nonetheless, we welcome the first anniversary of our Constitution, which we still call a new one, hoping to overcome the economic crisis, create a stable legislative system, and secure the guarantees of civil rights and freedoms.

The drafting of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus was carried out over a period of three years. Those were years of great changes in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of life of the Republic. The situation was changing rapidly: the disintegration of the USSR, the cancellation of the political power of the CPSU and the Communist Party of Belarus, a sharp drop in living standards, new points of orientation in the economic system (private entrepreneurship and ownership), a multiparty system, a new military doctrine, changes in foreign policy, and many other things. Under these circumstances, essentially contradictory approaches have often been proposed to resolve specific issues and remain fixed in a considerable amount of various normative acts. During its five years of activity, the Supreme Soviet alone has passed over 350 laws and 1,200 resolutions. To a certain extent, such an active legislative period was objectively necessary. There was a need, however, for a general concept of Belarus' state and socioeconomic development, and this concept has been created by the Constitution.

The Constitution, on the one hand, should resolve the mounting contradictions in laws, while on the other—it should become a basis for a new regulated system of relations. Or, in other words, the accumulated normative basis should be embodied, in some general form, in the Constitution, and subsequently—changed according to the Constitution. This task under the current changeable circumstances has proven quite difficult.

The drafters tried as much as possible to not only specify the content of constitutional articles, but to also make them broad so that they might be subsequently complemented by laws amended to the Constitution.

In connection with this, the period of implementing the constitutional norms by way of the adoption of new legislative acts on their basis may be complex and will take place amidst a confrontation of diverse opinions. The legislature's experience and the activity of the Constitutional Court have confirmed this conclusion on numerous occasions. This conclusion regards fundamental notions, categories, and principles envisioned by the Constitution, as well as the procedures and mechanisms for the realization of human relations and problems of mutual interaction between the individual, society, and the state.

In many spheres of social relations, the Constitution has placed its accents in a new way:

First, the man and human rights were declared a major value of the society and the state;

Second, this is the Constitution of a sovereign state, which intends to implement the idea of an independent nation and state;

Third, essentially new ideas were introduced—the law-governed state, the division of power, the state language—and conditions for implementing these ideas were created;

Fourth, the Constitution pays lesser attention, than in the past, to the political-ideological content of socioeconomic development.

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What prognosis can be made with regard to the stability of the new Constitution of the Republic of Belarus? I think that, due to the nature of its content, the Constitution will be stable and the attempts on the part of some politicians to change it will hardly be successful. The main task is to create, on its basis, many new normative acts, as well as to systemize and codify the current ones.

The Republic of Belarus' law on putting the Belarusian Constitution into force stipulated that "the laws specified in the Belarusian Constitution should be passed within a period of three years after the Constitution has come into force." However, the problem should be examined on a considerably wider scale. There needs to be a thorough analysis of all the republican legislation in force, a complex and determined effort to bring this legislation in line with the constitutional norms, as well as to amend them with other laws. Otherwise, the Constitution, in some regards, will not be able to play a part for which it was intended.

The above-mentioned point pertains particularly to the following chapters of the Constitution: "Fundamentals of Constitutional Systems" and "Individual, Society, and State." These are the two chapters forming the very essence of the Constitution, while other chapters are primarily oriented toward ensuring the actual implementation of the two chapters.

It is very urgent to create a special program for future legislative work, which, according to constitutional provisions, should include the following:

Draft laws oriented toward the implementation of the Constitution, the need for which is directly stipulated by the Constitution;

Draft laws oriented toward the realization of a concept of state and social development;

Draft laws oriented toward the creation of a mechanism for securing human rights and freedoms, as well as the functioning of the state apparatus;

Draft laws oriented toward the bringing of legislation in line with the Constitution. This program is currently being worked out by the nonprofit Council for Legal Issues, which was created by the Supreme Soviet Chairman, and the Institute of State Building.

A peculiar foundation for the remainder of the Constitution is formed by the chapter "Fundamentals of the State System." It fixes the basic principles of state building and functioning of the system of state bodies and other entities of the political system, the place and role of citizens in the system of social relations, the principles of implementing international ties, etc. Essentially, the content of the entire legal system of the Republic depends on the interpretation of this chapter.

Democracy, as a legal system, has existed for a long time; it appeared at the beginning of human civilization. However, democracy is different not only in different socioeconomic systems, but also in different countries. What type of democracy will be instituted in the Republic of Belarus? How stable and progressive will Belarusian democracy be? These questions still remain to be answered by legislators. A similar problem is posed by the realization of the attributes of a social and law-governed state, which has so far not been interpreted in a legal sense.

One might propose the following interpretation:

Social state may mean that the primary goal of the Republic of Belarus is to create conditions for the free and appropriate development of an individual, that is, for the fulfillment of individual interests settled within the framework of the law and in correlation with social interests;

Democratic state means that social goals are achieved by way of popular rule, that is, by representing the people's interests in the bodies of state authority and adopting resolutions to carry out the people's will;

Law-governed state, aside from the basic principles of its functioning and construction, should reflect the idea of correspondence of laws with the will and interests of citizens.

The state should guarantee the basic, generally accepted ideas of a social state:

— a non-humiliating subsistence minimum for everybody;

— equal social opportunities;

— social assistance to those in need.

The proposed interpretation stems, in our opinion, from Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution, which define man as "the highest value of society and the state," while "the people are the only source of state power" and execute their power directly and through representative bodies. [passage omitted]

Lukashenka Fires Newspaper Editor Seredich

MM2703110095 Moscow TRUD in Russian 24 Mar 95 p 1

[Report by Sergey Vaganov under the "Details" rubric: "The Guard Is Tired..."]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk—In Belarus there is a new scandal surrounding the press. A presidential edict has dismissed Iosif Seredich, chief editor of NARODNAYA GAZETA.

NARODNAYA GAZETA was founded by the Supreme Soviet, which elected the chief editor, also a deputy. It has to be said that in the space of five years this publication has become the widest circulation, most popular publication in Belarus. That is, it is truly of the people. Why? There are many reasons. But the chief one, in my view, is that the editor and the collective selected

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by him succeeded in making the newspaper accessible for the expression of practically all serious viewpoints on politics, economics, and life as a whole in present-day Belarus. The editor sacredly observed the principle of pluralism. And this is the result.

What of parliament—I repeat, the newspaper's founder? On 20 March, following the two days off after the edict, it decided to examine the question of the editor's "illegal dismissal." There were plenty of harsh expressions addressed to the president and the unconstitutionality of his decisions (not only concerning NARODNAYA GAZETA). The president addressed the deputies 21 March. He advised them to disband themselves after working for just one more week. That is, he did not conceal his intentions to "dismiss" parliament, thereby vividly recalling the historical precedent known by the name "The guard is tired!"

What is going on here? Why is the president being hindered so by parliament and its newspaper? Maybe they really do nothing but harm?

As regards the Supreme Soviet, the idea that it has become obsolete established itself in Belarusian public opinion long ago. As much as 18 months ago the necessary number of signatures was collected for a referendum to be held on the questions of its early dissolution and new elections. The referendum was not held, but parliament responded with statements of its intention to go early. It did not go, thereby, of course, seriously harming both the people and its own moral authority. In short, people do not like the present parliament at all.

They do like the president. But... less and less. This is borne out by public opinion polls, conversations in waiting lines and in other public places, and also by the mailbag of newspapers, including NARODNAYA GAZETA.

One of these letters addressed directly to the president was published 10 March. The president reckoned that it "calls for violence and civil confrontation." Hence the edict....

Calls of this kind, if they really do exist, must undoubtedly be punished. In accordance with the law. That is, in a normal, civilized, judicial manner. But the president took this matter upon himself. The title of the aforementioned edict is this: "On Individual Violations of Legislation in the Activity of the Mass Media." If it were based on past court rulings, it would be another matter, another argument. But there is nothing to argue about here, nothing to speak about....

If there is something to speak about, however, it is the absence of legal thought in the Belarusian corridors of power. Thus, also in society. It, this thought, simply does not exist. But what does exist? The sadly well-known "r-r-revolutionary expediency" does.

Precisely this "expediency" is obviously prompting the first Belarusian president to try to concentrate the legislature, the judiciary, and the "fourth" estate in his hands. With, of course, the good intention to fulfill in full the promises made to the people. For this it would be a good thing to eliminate all kinds of obstacles.

The parliamentary elections due in May, which make it highly problematic for the president to secure an obedient parliament, constitute the chief "obstacle" today. Proceeding from this, steps aimed at prolonging the election campaign indefinitely are already being considered. For example, the money for conducting it has not yet been transferred, although the government was meant to have transferred it back in February. It has been noticed in society that occasionally even the president himself unobtrusively suggests to the people the idea that the elections will undermine public "stability and order."

Trends that are dangerous for Belarus' democratic development conform with this logic. Including steps aimed at monopolizing the mass media in the state's hands. It is essentially a question of an attempt to hold complete sway in the mass media, ignoring even the constitutional separation of powers, and to subject them to strong state-ideological pressure capable of squeezing out of them the vestiges of not only opposition thought but also critical thought.

Well, all means are good in a power struggle. Particularly the mass media. After the sensation of the blank spaces on newspaper pages, the dismissal of two chief editors of mass state publications, and the ban on printing a number of private newspapers at the state printing house (there are no others in the republic) few doubts remain about such a conclusion. And then there is the edict....

From the viewpoint of democratic norms and legal thought, it is not even the editor's dismissal that is of the greatest interest in it but the preamble and the first point. The preamble states that "the mass media have recently carried distortions of the state's international, national, and social policy concerning the ensuring of citizens' rights...." In order to prevent these distortions in the future, i.e. a free interpretation and assessment of this policy, the president resolved, "for the purposes of fulfilling legislation" in the activity of the mass media, to submit a proposal to set up an "Oversight Council" ["Naglyadalnyy Savet"] under him with the participation of representatives of the public in its work.

Let us leave aside the name of the proposed organ, which translates somewhat ambiguously into Russian: either "observation" or "oversight." Although many people believe that a more fitting word here is one which requires no translation: **censorship.**

Here is another feature, another important detail of what is happening. Observers link the issuing of this edict with the return to the post of "press curator" of Colonel Zametalin, who loyally served ex-Premier Kebich in the same role—I will remind you that Kebich was Aleksandr Lukashenka's "fiercest" rival in the struggle for the

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presidency. Having lived out his brief civilian retirement, he recently headed the Sociopolitical Information Administration in the president's staff. Journalists, and not only journalists, directly link this "unexpected" appointment with the upcoming elections. True, some people are bewildered: Why did the president need this? The president himself dispelled this bewilderment. Addressing parliament, he said that, if Kebich had adopted Zametalin's "plan for conducting the election campaign" in the past, he would have won....

It seems that Belarus will soon be tasting the fruits of this "plan" in full. But who will win?...

Editor: Move 'Encroaches' on Democracy

WS2403133395 Minsk ZVYAZDA in Belarusian 21 Mar 95 p 1

[Interview with Iosif Syaredzich, recently dismissed editor in chief of NARODNAYA GAZETA, by Valyantsin Zhdanko; place and date not given: "Supreme Soviet Deputy Iosif Syaredzich: 'The President, Apparently, Wanted To Neutralize Our Paper's Position....'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zhdanko] **What, in your opinion, prompted the president to relieve you of your duties at this particular time? Was it really that letter [published under the "Letter to the President" rubric]?**

[Syaredzich] I believe that it was primarily the current political situation in Belarus. More than six months have already passed since people expressed their confidence in him. Certain deadlines are approaching, by which time some of his promises should have been fulfilled. Moreover, I think that it has not always been the president's fault that he has not kept his promises. There have been a great deal of difficulties in this regard. Nevertheless, it remains obvious that he has not kept all his promises. This is coupled with the upcoming Supreme Soviet elections. The spiral of political activity is unwinding, and emotions are running high... Some people perhaps consider NARODNAYA GAZETA as a sort of detonator presenting views of various, often opposing, political forces. While a majority of the media are directly subordinated to the Cabinet of Ministers, the president, and his administration, NARODNAYA GAZETA is an organ of the Supreme Soviet. When passions flare up in parliament, it is also reflected on the pages of NARODNAYA GAZETA. The president perhaps decided to take this step, knowing about the newspaper's adamant and persistent position. This is not a conflict between Syaredzich and [President] Lukashenka. This is a conflict between the president's views and the views presented by authors frequently published on the pages of our paper.

[Zhdanko] **What are you going to do in the current situation?**

[Syaredzich] First and foremost, the Supreme Soviet should express its opinion. I have sent an appropriate statement to [Supreme Soviet Chairman] Myacheslaw Ivanavich Hryb, and I hope that he will present it to the Supreme Soviet. I am a law-abiding man: Let it be what the parliament decides. Another thing is that I will still have my own opinion about what happened. I think that the "Letter to the President" was merely an excuse to issue this edict. If this article had not been published, there would have been another pretext. The president, apparently, wanted to neutralize our paper's position.

[Zhdanko] **Do you think that the letter, which became a formal reason behind your dismissal, posed a threat to public stability?**

[Syaredzich] This was an absolutely ordinary letter—we had published many similar letters before. Moreover, it was published under the "Letter to the President" rubric. If the president did not agree with the author, he could present his opinions in our newspaper at any time. And the fact that the author used a pseudonym is a common practice, all the more so, in the current situation. I regret, however, that my subordinates informed me too late that the author, who, by the way, had previously been publishing his articles in our newspaper, exercised his legitimate right to use a pseudonym.

[Zhdanko] **The staff of NARODNAYA GAZETA reacted to your dismissal in a surprisingly calm manner. Did this not upset you?**

[Syaredzich] I helped assemble this staff from my first days at our newspaper. And during a meeting with the president, it was a pleasure for me to see my staff reasonably defending our newspaper's position.

[Zhdanko] **Did this meeting take place at the House of Press?**

[Syaredzich] No, it took place at the House of Government. It lasted two hours, or even longer. And the fact that we did not resort to radical measures such as a strike or refusal to publish our newspaper, does not mean that such things cannot be done later. First and foremost, however, one must adhere to the law, if we want to build a law-governed state.

[Zhdanko] **Did the conversation with the president produce any constructive results?**

[Syaredzich] It did not. The staff proposed that the edict be repealed and the situation reexamined. The president, however, adhered to his standpoint.

[Zhdanko] **Do you think that the edict was the president's personal initiative, or the new chief of the information directorate suggested that he take this step?**

[Syaredzich] As the saying goes, the king is only as good as his followers. The same thing can be said about the president. There are honest, hard-working, clever, and educated people on his team. But it is no secret that there are a number of populists and accidental people, for whom it makes no difference with whom they work. They only want to be as close to the authorities as possible. All this implies sad conclusions.

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[Zhdanko] Do you not think that the problem does not concern NARODNAYA GAZETA alone, but that it encroaches on the foundation of democracy in our country—the freedom of speech? Journalists' passiveness in this situation may cost our state a lot in the future.

[Syaredzich] Yes, the point is not this particular newspaper and the fate of its chief editor. The point is the individual's right to have personal opinions and make them public. There is no future for our country without this right.

Parliament Votes, Rejects Call for Dissolution

WS2403134795 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Belarusian lawmakers today rejected President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's proposal that parliament complete its work, finish unaccomplished tasks, and dissolve itself this week. Most deputies have voted for the Supreme Soviet to continue its work. It has been decided that the next plenary session will be held on 10 April.

Court Action Brought Against President

LD2403182895 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0900 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Zyanon Paznyak, the leader of the parliamentary opposition of the Belarusian Popular Front has brought a court action against the Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka. At a news conference on Thursday he said that the reason for turning to the court is the false statement by the president—that Paznyak called on the citizens of the republic to participate in military actions in Chechnya on the side of Dudayev.

Defense Minister Says Reform Working

WS2703103795 Minsk BELAPAN in English 1500 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "At present the officers of the Belarusian Army have incentives which allow them not to consider opportunities for going over to the armed forces of other countries," the minister of defence Anatol Kastenka declared at a TV press conference on March 22. According to him, first of all among them are moral and psychological incentives. Military servicemen are beginning to understand that the Army exists in fact, the Army has the future. Besides this, the overwhelming majority of units of the Belarusian Army are stationed in military camps with good amenities, and, out of 22,000 Belarusian officers, 6,000 are serving in the Belarusian capital. Of considerable importance are material incentives. The salaries of officers are coming nearer the level of the Russian Army, and even exceed it in some positions. This is a result of the gradual process of a radical reformation of the national Armed Forces, the change of the state's attitude towards its Army, as well as the creation of a conception of national security which, according to Mr. Kastenka, "is a starting-point in the construction of a system of state and military defence, the realization of military reform." The minister defined the creation of a mobile group of forces, which will include units and subunits of the Vitsebsk parachute landing division and the Brest independent landing assault brigade, as one of the components of reformation. The minister expressed his opinion about what the notion "defence sufficiency" means: a group of forces which guarantees the independence and territorial integrity of the state. He informed that "today the Republic is in a very interesting geostrategical situation, in a very interesting encirclement of states." As a result, according to Mr. Kastenka, "it is not out of question that Belarus will find itself in the sphere of interests of different coalition groups with different military-political orientation." "And though the situation is now favourable enough, and we do not expect an aggression from either the East or the South, or the West or the North-West, nevertheless we should determine priorities in the construction of our group of forces", he said.

Authorities Ban Aum Shinrikyo Sect

LD2403201195 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1700 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As a BELAPAN correspondent has found out at the Committee for Issues of Religion at the Ministry of Culture and at the Minsk Executive Committee Department for Religious Issues, there are supporters of the pseudo-religious doctrine of Aum Shinrikyo in our capital, too. They have more than once tried to officially register their sect. Their application has been turned down on the grounds that in the opinion of experts it poses a danger for society and the health of people.

Moldova

Government To Receive $290 Million in Foreign Aid

LD2403201495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, Mar 24 (FIA-Interfax)—Moldova will get $290 million in foreign aid this year, a Moldovan government source told Interfax's Financial Information Agency referring to the latest decision by a consultative group of international financiers and the Paris Club of donor states.

He said that about $190 million of this amount is in the form of loans and the rest in the form of technical assistance grants including a $90 million IMF stand-by credit.

Other would-be creditors include the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union and the U.S. administration. The

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resources are intended to support the country's program of economic reforms including the narrowing of its budget deficit and investment projects for the private sector.

Moldova has agreed to IMF demands to curb inflation by a monthly 10

later this year, from 15 percent in 1994.

Dniester Leader on Russian Army Pullout Referendum

LD2403171095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TIRASPOL, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The referendum scheduled for March 26 will enable the population of Transdniestria to voice their view on the advisability of the proposed pull-out of Russia's 14th Army, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the self-proclaimed Transdniestrian [Dniester] Republic Grigoriy Marakutsa told Interfax.

The Transdniestrian government decided to schedule the referendum together with municipal elections so as "to put an end to political innuendo-making," Marakutsa said.

"Chisinau insisted that only the Tiraspol leaders, and not Transdniestria as a whole, raise objections to the pull-out of Russia's 14th Army. Now Tiraspol is giving the people a chance to voice their view on this matter."

In Tiraspol's view, the referendum will put an end to moves for the realization of the Moldovan-Russian agreement on the pull-out of the 14th Army.

The agreement calls for the stage-by-stage withdrawal of the 14th Army and a simultaneous solution to other problems, including Transdniestria's legal status. Unfortunately, attention focuses on the troop withdrawal and all other problems are being ignored, Marakutsa said.

Moscow, international organizations and the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] will be briefed on the returns of the upcoming referendum.

The OSCE mission, which has not been recognized by Chisinau, refuses to monitor the referendum.

However, Marakutsa said, a delegation of Russia's State Duma will be expected to visit Transdniestria on March 26. The delegation will represent, among others, the Duma's Agrarian and Communist factions.

Russian 'Auxiliary' Troops Withdraw

AU2403214695 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1944 GMT 21 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 20/3/1995—Four trains loaded with military equipment and Russian soldiers were pulled out during the last month from the Dniester region. Sources at the Chisinau Ministry of Defense Press Service told BASA that the units withdrawn are auxiliary troops that previously were part of the Odessa military district and do not belong to the 14th Army. According to the quoted source, at present the technical maintenance battalion is being withdrawn from Rabnita and similar subunits from Dubasari. In fact, the trains contain technical units, construction equipment, and other machinery, while the hardware and armament are not included. Ministry of Defense Press Service sources also said that at the moment the withdrawal of these troops is halted because a law that would govern the Russian troops' and their equipment's crossing Ukraine is not yet in place. At present the Chisinau Transportation Ministry conducts negotiations on this matter with the Kiev counterpart.

Lebed: Local Leaders Prefer 'Instability'

AU2503203395 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG, 24/3/1995—The commander of the Russian 14th Army, Lieutenant General Aleksandr Lebed, has stated that Tiraspol leaders had decided to arrange the Army withdrawal referendum to attract more voters to local elections.

"The local rulers are perfectly aware of the political apathy of the population who can hardly make ends meet. Many people would certainly ignore the elections which can change nothing in their life. However, the voters will definitely come for the referendum and, simultaneously, will cast their election papers," he pointed out.

In his opinion, the local election results are impossible to predict. As for the Army withdrawal, about 90 percent electorate will support its remaining in the region, he said, because "it is being viewed by people as the chief guarantor of peace and stability in the present-day political turmoil in the region."

He believes, local leaders are interested in the instability, because they are not at all wishing to settle the Dniester conflict. "Fishing in troubled waters is always better, isn't it? The leaders have thieved out everything, and the current chaos and arbitrary rule is a smokescreen saving them from responsibility for their crimes," Lebed emphasized.

He said, nobody informed him officially about possible arrival of Russian parliamentarians as observers at the referendum.

"People of certain political orientation may only come, and their ways are not mine," the commander remarked.

Lebed on Dniester Referendum Results

LD2603034595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0130 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Chisinau, 26 Mar—A referendum on the withdrawal of the Russian 14th Army will take place in the Dniester region today. Local elections will be held at the same time. The Dniester region leadership says that the plebiscite is being held in connection with the fact that the governments of Moldova and Russia signed an agreement on the withdrawal of the Russian Army without taking into account the opinion of the inhabitants of the region on whose territory the troops are billeted.

The leadership of Moldova has declared the elections and the referendum illegal. In a message to Ivan Rybkin, chairman of the Russian State Duma, Petru Lucinschi, chairman of the Moldovan parliament, stressed that holding the referendum will not promote an improvement in Russian-Moldovan relations or the settlement of the Dniester region conflict.

Aleksandr Lebed, commander of the army, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent that the leadership of the Dniester region is holding the referendum to attract the population of the region to the elections. In his opinion, the results of the referendum have been practically decided beforehand. The overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the Dniester region will speak out against the withdrawal of Russian soldiers whom they see as their defenders in the event of a new armed conflict arising.

Aleksandr Karaman, vice president of the Dniester region, said that Russian State Duma deputies from the communist and Liberal Democratic Party of Russia factions have been invited to attend the referendum in the capacity of observers.

'Massive' Vote for 14th Army To Stay

AU2603164195 Paris AFP in English 1612 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By Paooa Messana]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tiraspol, Moldova, March 26 (AFP)—Moldova's Russian-speaking minority in the self-proclaimed Trans-Dnestr republic defied the authorities in an illegal referendum Sunday [26 March] to vote massively that Russia's 14th Army should remain in the region.

The result of the poll, in which almost 60 percent of the population had voted by mid-afternoon, was a foregone conclusion according to pre-vote surveys in which a clear majority backed the continued presence of Moscow's troops despite Chisinau's opposition.

A clear majority of the 800,000 inhabitants of the Trans-Dnestr region of eastern Moldova are Russian-speakers. The population in the rest of the former Soviet republic are mainly Romanian-speakers.

Chisinau has been at pains to avoid incidents during the polling which was unhindered even at Bendery, on the west bank of the Dnestr River, where local administration and police functions have neen carried out jointly by the two sides.

The presence of the 10,000-strong 14th Army, commanded by General Alexander Lebed, has become a serious obstacle to progress in talks between the authorities in Chisinau and the Russian-speakers who wish to maintain ties with Moscow.

The force is the last Russian troop contingent to be stationed on foreign soil against the wishes of the host authorities.

Voters questioned Sunday outside polling booths across the region were unanimous in backing the continued presence of the 14th Army, based in Tiraspol since the Soviet era.

The Trans-Dnestrians, who unilaterally declared their region independent in 1991, are anxious to retain the army as a "guarantor of peace and security."

Under an accord between Moscow and Chisinau at the end of last year, the army is to withdraw from the Trans-Dnestr region within three years.

However the timetable for implementing the accord has been delayed by a dispute over interpretation of the text, notably over the statutory guarantees to be granted to Trans-Dnestrians by Moldovan authorities once the troops pull out.

Several hundred people died in 1992 in several months of clashes between Moldovans and the territory's Russian-speaking minority which includes Ukrainians.

The 14th Army has its own candidates standing in the local polls, mostly members of a centrist coalition opposed to the Russian-speakers' "president" Igor Smirnov but backed by the region's hardline conservatives.

Lebed, who has described the Russian-speakers' leaders in Tiraspol as "corrupt," has offered the army candidates muted support in the hope that the election of a moderate council will end the political impasse.

On Saturday Smirnov told a press conference that his self-styled republic did not contest Moldova's borders but simply sought "the status of a state within a Moldovan confederation."

Chisinau has dismissed the confederation proposal, offering regional autonomy but no distinctive status.

In an interview with AFP, Moldovan Foreign Minister Mihai Popov described Trans-Dnestr as a "ghost republic created with the support of Moscow," adding that the government "rejects the results of this referendum as well as local elections taking place at the same time."

He said he had lodged an official protest at the presence in the republic's "capital" Tiraspol of around 10 election

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"observers" from the Russian Duma, or lower parliamentary house, as "interference in Moldova's internal affairs."

Opposition Rally for Reunification With Romania

LD2603155995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1431 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau Mar 26 (Interfax)—The opposition Christian-Democratic People's Front (CDPF) is marking the 77th anniversary of the reunification of Bessarabia and Romania.

Some 3,000 people gathered for a rally in Chisinau on Sunday [26 March] on this occasion. Among them were students who joined the meeting to continue the action of protest against the government's socio-economic policies, started last Monday.

CDPF Chairman, Deputy of the Moldovan parliament Yuriy Rozhka stated that "the day of reunification with Romania is not only a festive occasion but the continuation of the struggle for the restoration of the historical borders of our homeland—Romania."

"This is not anti-state propaganda, but the wish of all Bessarabian Romanians, opposing the shameful doctrine of Moldova's independence," he said. "The People's Front is the only political organization which has openly proclaimed the unification of all Romanian territories into a single state to be its main goal," he said.

The demonstrators carried Romanian flags and chanted: "Great Romania! Romanian Brothers, Unite!", "Down with Snegur!"

Earlier, Chairman of the Moldovan parliament Petr Luchinskiy had stated that the recent actions of protest were encouraging the Tiraspol leaders to strengthen their state system and aggravating the Transdniestrian problem which the Moldovan leaders were trying to solve.

Snegur, Gagauz Leaders Discuss 16 Apr Local Elections

AU2403214395 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2058 GMT 23 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Comrat BASAPRESS, 23/3/1995—Gagauz President Stepan Topal and Gagauz Speaker Mikhail Kendigelyan met on 21 March with Moldovan President Mircea Snegur; the parties failed to agree on the holding of local elections in Gagauz Yeri-Gagauzia, Vasiliy Neikovchin, Gagauz Parliament press secretary, told BASA. Neither Topal nor Kendigelyan has the right to annul the decision taken by the Gagauz Parliament, according to which the press secretary, told BASA. "Neither Topal nor Kendigelyan has the right to annul the decision taken by the Gagauz Parliament, according to which the local elections will not take place in Gagauzaia on 16 April," stated Neikovchin. He also added that the Gagauz officials expressed their concern about the fact that the results of the referendum on the constitution of Gagauz-Yeri-Gagauzia were not made public. Referring to the date of the elections for the Bashkan (Governor) and People's Assembly, Neikovchin stated that, although the joint governmental commission for enforcing the law on the Gagauz special juridical status provides for the local elections to take place on 28 May, "the Gagauz officials will review the decision." The Chisinau television program MESAGER announced yesterday evening that the Comrat representatives and President Snegur reached an agreement on the Gagauzians' participation in the 16 April local elections.

Bishop 'Concerned' by Gagauz People's 'Conversion to Islam'

AU2403214295 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1944 GMT 20 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 20/3/1995—"We are concerned about the Gagauzians' conversion to Islam," Tighina Bishop Vikentiy told BASA. According to him, "this phenomenon is not yet observed on the surface, but it can be felt among the Gagauz population." "I will not dwell upon concrete examples of Gagauzians' conversion to Islam, but I have information that students in the Comrat educational institutions and Gagauz youths studying in Turkey are converting to Islam," said Vikentiy. Gheorghe Armasu, head of the Governmental Service for Cults, said to BASA that he has no information "acknowledging the Gagauzians' turning to Islam." Konstantin Syrf, "Kardashlyk-Fratie-Bratstvo" Gagauz Cultural Society chairman, told BASA that "the Gagauzians have been and will be a Christian people and the statements in certain publications like LITERATURA SI ARTA and KISHINOVSKIYE NOVOSTIY that Gagauzians turn to Islam en masse are naked lies." BASA learned from the Moldovan Metropolitan See that "there is no danger of the Gagauzians' conversion to Islam."

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Kazakhstan

Russian Deputy Minister Panov Arrives For Talks

LD2503110795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1100 GMT 25 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty March 25 TASS—Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov who arrived here this morning, met Kazakh First Deputy Foreign Minister Nurlan Danenov.

The Kazakh diplomat informed his Russian counterpart of the situation in the country, results of the first session of the Kazakh peoples' assembly held on Friday and pointed to the presence of great possibilities to boost bilateral relations.

In turn, Panov expressed opinion that the neighbouring countries should cooperate closer in various spheres and seek to fulfill strictly achieved understandings.

In this connection, he pointed to the great importance of the agreements on citizenship which were recently signed by the presidents of the two countries. These agreements can become a good precedent for all states of the commonwealth.

Later, the delegations of the Kazakh and Russian foreign ministries started talks in a broader format, which will continue till this evening, since the sides will have to discuss a wide range of issues of mutual interest.

The russian side is led by Panov, the Kazakh—by deputy minister Vladimir Alesin.

The sides are exchanging opinions on the state of and prospects for the development of relations between the two countries and the preparation for the coming official visit to Kazakhstan by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The two delegations will also examine a place of the Asia-Pacific region in the foreign policy strategy of Kazakhstan and Russia, a conference on cooperation and confidence-building measures in Asia and a position of the two states concerning Caspian cooperation.

The item on the situation in Tajikistan was also put on the agenda of the talks on a proposal of the Russian side.

The sides plan to sign a document, after the talks, on establishing mutual exchange of Russian and Kazakh diplomats to undergo practical training.

Panov will depart for Bishkek from Almaty on March 26.

Egyptian Minister Discusses Islamic Center

LD2603134295 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1000 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Prime Minister Imangali Tas[illegible]nbetov today met Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, minister of religious affairs and endowments of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The talks were about documents signed in 1993 by the presidents of Egypt and Kazakhstan under which the construction of an Islamic cultural center in Almaty is to get under way. In addition to the traditional Islamic features, the site will include a university with a library and hostels.

The Egyptian side has taken on the funding of the Islamic cultural center. Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub expressed the wish that the opening ceremony would be timed to take place during the Egyptian president's official visit to Almaty. The Egyptian delegation presented full documentation on the project to the Kazakh side.

Having carefully listened to the Egyptian minister, Imangali Nuraliyevich assured that Kazakhstan will exert every effort to start the construction of Islamic cultural center soon. Within 10 days a special commission will start tackling this question, he said.

Both sides agreed that construction of the site would help strengthen the cultural and spiritual links between Kazakhstan and Egypt.

Demirel Backs Nazarbayev Dismissal of Parliament

LD2403191495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1632 GMT 24 Mar 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Turkish President Suleyman Demirel on Thursday telephoned his Kazakh counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Kazakh president's press service reported.

Demirel assessed the recent dissolution of the Kazakh parliament by Nazarbayev in fulfillment of a decision by the Constitutional Court as "a convincing confirmation of the triumph of true democracy and the rule of law and evidence of Nursultan Nazarbayev's adherence to the observance of constitutional principles," said a press service release, obtained by Interfax.

The Turkish president also "expressed confidence that the sustained development of democratic reforms in Kazakhstan is irreversible," the release said.

It said Demirel had informed Nazarbayev about antiterrorist measures being taken in Turkey and that the Kazakh president had expressed support for the Turkish government's efforts "to preserve the stability and territorial integrity" of the country.

The two leaders reached an agreement for Demirel to come to Kazakhstan for an official visit, the dates for which will be negotiated via "diplomatic channels," the press service said.

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Supreme Council Proposes Extending Nazarbayev's Mandate

LD2403162995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1603 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, Mar 24 (Interfax)—The People's Assembly of Kazakhstan has proposed extending, until the year 2000, President Nazarbayev's mandate. The Assembly, which is holding session in Almaty, is a consultative body under the Kazakh president.

A delegate to the Assembly, Khafiz Matayev, motivated the proposal by the need for "strong leadership" in the transition period.

While they pointed to the need for parliamentary structures, other speakers cited financial problems for opposing early parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan. A number of those who took the floor felt that under democratic rhetoric a dictatorship could appear.

Speaking at the opening of the Assembly, Nursultan Nazarbayev said that constitutional reform, more action on economic reforms, moves against crime and the enforcement of law and order would precede new parliamentary elections.

The Peoples Assembly of Kazakhstan is to discuss constitutional reform and meet again to decide "what constitution the people want," Nazarbayev said.

In Nazarbayev's view, Kazakhstan needs a two-house legislature with clearly-defined powers. The state constitution must make it clear that the president is entitled to dissolve parliament and that parliament is entitled to impeach the president. Kazakhstan must live under one authority although there may be numerous branches of power, Nazarbayev said.

Constitutional amendments must insure the stability of, and balance between the power structures in both Almaty and the provinces.

Nazarbayev was elected president in December, 1991. The next presidential elections were slated to take place in 1996. The Kazakh Constitution says that the president cannot serve more than two terms in office.

Nazarbayev Addresses Peoples' Assembly

LD2403210195 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1507 GMT 24 Mar 95

[Speech by President Nursultan Nazarbayev at opening session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan in Almaty on 24 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] The first session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan, the primary public consultative body under the president of the republic, took place today in Almaty.

[Unidentified correspondent] It is symbolic that such an imposing forum is taking place during the days of the celebration of Navruz, during days when nature is waking up and man's soul is striving for renewal.

Representatives of different ethnic groups and denominations, many of which arrived in Kazakhstan in the evil years of war and mass repressions, during the development of the Virgin Lands, gathered today in this hall. One thing unifying all of us is that we are citizens of sovereign Kazakhstan, we are responsible for the fate of our friendly, multi-ethnic home. Today this resounded in every speech. We are living in a very fragile and unstable world where processes of disintegration, interethnic tension and conflict are under way. Time has proved that a mono-ethnic population is not a universal panacea. Against a background of interethnic confrontation and wars, peace, accord, and stability are still being preserved in Kazakhstan.

To a considerable extent this depends on the flexible and wise policy of the head of our state, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who is indisputably generally recognized as leader. Today, in his speech before the participants of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan, the president again stressed that he will do his best to develop friendly relations between the representatives of various ethnic groups, to promote their cultural and spiritual revival and development on the basis of the principle of equality. [passage omitted]

The assembly is to participate actively on the basis of civilized, democratic standards in forming the political culture of citizens, in ensuring that the diverse ethnic interests of the peoples of Kazakhstan are borne in mind in seeking compromise. [passage omitted]

After the delegates finished the debates, they discussed and adopted an appeal from the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan to the citizens of the republic: A resolution recommending that the head of the state should hold a national referendum on extending the powers of the country's president until December 2001. In support of their opinion, the speakers put forward arguments that at present presidential government must be introduced in the country in order to advance first and foremost economic reforms, bring order to all spheres and toughen the fight against crime. They think that drawing society's attention to various election campaigns is not desired at the present time.

Nazarbayev made a concluding speech at the session. Estimating its results, he stressed that a great historic event has taken place in the life of the republic, and expressed confidence that the traditions of friendship and fraternity founded by several generations of Kazakhs will be suitably continued and developed.

[Nazarbayev] No matter how proud we are of our interethnic accord and social stability, we need to deeply absorb all the painful aspects of the language and migration situations, and other serious issues that still exist.

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Kazakhstan is not only a multi-ethnic but also a multi-confessional state, where Orthodox, Protestant, Buddhist, and Catholic believers, along with representatives of other world religions, live side by side with Muslims—a total of 60 percent of the people of Kazakhstan consider themselves to be Muslims. This is a serious factor, which allows the stable sociopolitical situation to be maintained, because practically the same moral principles are laid in the basis of all the religions: Love for the people, censure of immorality, forgiveness of sincere delusions, and a tolerant attitude toward heterodoxy. Thus all the republic's parishioners are equally tolerant, morally stable and peace-loving, irrespective of their denomination.

The Kazakh leadership has forged good and mutually-respectful relations with the supreme hierarchies of all the confessions. We are trying to respond to the needs and requirements of all believers, without giving preference to one over the other. It would be a good thing if such good relations could be established at the regional level as well. I am sure all Kazakhstan people would benefit from it.

I must note with regret that extremist forces are acting under the cover of national flags. Perverting the national idea, playing on strained national feelings under conditions of economic difficulty, they are trying to exploit the problem to their own mercenary ends. There were attempts, still not fully uncovered, as you may recall, to paint simple criminal cases in Ust-Kamenogorsk, in Issyk, in Novyy Uzen in national colors. It is sufficient to remember the last episode connected with the apparent kidnapping of one of the newly-fledged Cossacks. Attempts to provoke inter-ethnic conflicts are not excluded. We all should be ready for this, be on our guard. On this occasion I would like to draw the attention of the law enforcement bodies of Kazakhstan to the necessity of urgent and very strict action against the slightest manifestation of racism, chauvinism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism. I remark on the last point especially, as a number of publications are virtually holding a competition for the most anti-Semitic exercise. There has never been this in Kazakhstan, and I assure you that there never will be.

It is necessary to carry out constitutional reforms. A two-chamber parliamentary system is needed. Each branch of power should carry out its own business, without encroaching on another's sphere of authority. If the practice of a tug-of-war emerges, if parliament becomes a political club for deputies to express themselves rather than a legislative body, there will be no tranquillity in society. We have seen that on the territory of the former Soviet Union, and here at home too.

The executive branch of power seems to be a tasty morsel to deputies, because it has real power. The legislative power always traditionally encroaches on its functions. This causes conflicts that seem to an outsider to be the suppression of the legislative power by the executive power. But, in actual fact, this is the executive power's actions to protect itself against the legislative power's encroachments.

Why does it happen so? Because, as a rule, people who are, mildly speaking, rather voluble, who are far from caring about the interests of the whole state, and who are often very arrogant, have been elected to parliament in recent years. In addition to that, all the overt and covert opposition, including that in the media, joined parliament in opposing the executive power. It also should be noted that we are lacking in experience of democracy and parliamentary culture.

There is no system of checks and balances in the Constitution, although this principle is declared in it. The point is that in certain circumstances parliament could suspend the powers of the head of state, and vice versa. In the process of working out the Constitution, I insisted on the above mentioned principles of checks and balances, but the recently dissolved parliament of the 12th convocation unanimously rejected these proposals. In the interests of the state and society such a mechanism is, undoubtedly, necessary.

I will use this period without parliament to strengthen order in the state and to conduct a resolute fight against crime. In recent days presidential edicts have introduced very decisive changes in the present laws relating to the fight against corruption. In its confrontation with the criminal world, society should have the advantage. Today the situation is the contrary. The situation has reached a crucial point. Someone justly noted that violence feeds on submissiveness, like fire on straw. Now we will sharply and decisively change the situation. All the inhabitants of Kazakhstan are demanding this today.

As the Byzantines used to say, there are two ways to achieve a goal: The way of law and the way of the beast. I think we will not deny that we have chosen the first way, and must secure the first way—the majesty and supremacy of the law. No society can be stable and flourishing if its citizens do not observe the law. The inalienable attribute of democratic society is not the declared, but the true supremacy of the law—not raging passions at public meetings and destabilizing political slogans, not the subjective will of the powers that be, but the observance by all citizens of all the standards worked out and accepted by society. This is our main path.

In connection with the latest events related to the decisions of the Constitutional Court, provocative cries are heard: A dictatorship is approaching! I answer: yes, a dictatorship is approaching, but it is the dictatorship of our country's Constitution and law. The people shouting are those who do not like this, and whom this threatens with dangerous consequences. A dictatorship could indeed come, if chaos and lawlessness are created in the country behind democratic slogans. In that case, the people will certainly ask for a strong hand to establish order.

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There is a need soon to adopt a real program for developing languages, which would not demand that adult Russian-speaking people master the Kazakh language on an improbable time-scale, as some people today say they should, but would envisage that Kazakhs and others should study the Russian language, because today it [the Russian language] is still and will be for a long time to come the main means of obtaining information.

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Receives European Parliament Delegation

LD2403191395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1632 GMT 24 Mar 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Askar Akayev hopes for close cooperation between the European and new Kyrgyz parliaments. This is what Akayev said Thursday to Carlos Rables Pique who brought a delegation of the EP [European parliament] to Bishkek. The EP delegation is visiting Bishkek in the context of cooperation agreements between Kyrgyzstan and the European Communities' Commission for Interparliamentary Relations.

Akayev attached special importance to the first two sessions of the Kazakh legislature because these will be expected to pass "a new generation of bills" which are to underlie the radical economic reforms. The Kyrgyz legislature is to open its first session next week.

Akayev sees Kyrgyzstan's economic legislation as inadequate. He appreciates the European Parliament's support to the efforts to draw up Kyrgyzstan's civil code which is currently waiting to be considered by the new parliament and which lays the legal groundwork for private enterprise and private property.

Also on Thursday the delegation of the European Parliament met with Kyrgyz Prime Minister Abbas Dzhumagulov, Foreign Minister and parliament.

Akayev Proposes Purge on Law Enforcement Bodies

LD2503150895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1437 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, Mar 25 (Interfax)—President Askar Akayev proposed Saturday [25 March] a "frontal purge" in Kyrgyzstan's law enforcement bodies and an early reorganization of the republican Interior Ministry.

Addressing chief law enforcers in Bishkek, he revealed government plans to launch "a new massive campaign against crime and corruption" soon.

He said that crime in Kyrgyzstan was so rampant that it was threatening stability in the republic.

Crime, as Akayev put it, claims the position of "a fifth power in the country." "Mafia is represented in all structures of state power with the law enforcement bodies, especially the State Security Committee, being inactive," he stressed.

According to him, there have been cases of the underworld being in contact with law enforcers, judiciary, and municipality official and taking over some media.

Akayev called for close interaction between the law enforcement bodies with the Prosecutor General's Office to coordinate their activities.

He also suggested toughening criminal legislation up to enforcing such punishment as life imprisonment. He argued that "the liberal laws being applied in Kyrgyzstan can be conducive for criminal elements infiltration from neighboring states such as Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan."

Uzbekistan

Japan Agrees To Supply Goods, Medical Equipment

LD2403185995 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Russian 1741 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted]

Soon, various goods worth up to 900 million Japanese yen, and children's medical equipment worth up to 700 million yen, will be delivered to our homeland. Documents were then signed for the Uzbek party by Otkir Sultanov, the deputy prime minister and minister of foreign economic affairs, and for the Japanese party by Ukeru Magosaki, the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Japan to Uzbekistan.

People's Democratic Party Meets German Delegation

LD2603135095 Tashkent GOLOS UZBEKISTANA in Russian 25 Mar 95 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Meeting at the Central Council"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 23 March a delegation led by Willy Wimmer, vice president of the parliamentary assembly of the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe [OSCE] and a deputy in the German Bundestag, was received at the Central Council of the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan [PDPU].

Abdulhafiz Jalolov, first secretary of the PDPU Central Council, told the guest about the reforms that are currently being implemented under the leadership of republic's President Islam Karimov to establish democratic structures in the country. One important step in this field, he said, was the elections to the new republic's parliament and local bodies of state power that were held on a multi-party basis for the first time on 25 December 1994.

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Mr. Wimmer expressed his opinion that the experience which Germany and the organization he represents have built up over many years could be useful for organizing the activities of the Supreme Assembly and local bodies of state power in independent Uzbekistan.

The first secretary answered questions that the guests asked about the PDPU's activities and its place in the republic's sociopolitical life.

The counsellor of the German Embassy in the Republic of Uzbekistan, Hans-Juergen Keilholz, as well as I. Kochmarik, secretary of the PDPU Central Council, and O. Turgunov and L. Gulyamov, first secretaries of the party's Tashkent region and Tashkent city councils, took part in the meeting.

Results of British Trade Delegation Visit

LD2603153295 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 25 Mar 95 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Under the Conditions of Initiative-Based Economics"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The program for a British trade mission's visit to our republic, which, as the guests said, was marked by its intensity, has come to an end. At the news conference that took place before their departure, head of the mission, Mr. D. Brey [as transliterated], chairman of the Uzbek-British Council for Trade and Industry [UBCTI]; Mr. R. Land, member of the UBCTI and chairman of the British-Asian Chamber of Commerce; and Paul Bergne, the United Kingdom's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Uzbekistan, briefed journalists on their impressions of their business contacts and answered questions.

The establishment of the Uzbek-British council last year was dictated by the great need to develop economic relations between our countries, define joint projects for future activity, and inform the two governments about difficulties and obstacles standing in the way of cooperation.

The mission included businessmen who already have business interests in our republic as well as some who were in the country for the first time. Both categories were pleasantly surprised by the economic and political stability, and the approximately 500 members of the British-Asian Chamber of Commerce will be informed of this.

One can already say with confidence that despite the difficulties which the republic is currently experiencing, British businessmen will be coming back here. Take, for instance, Rolls Royce, a company which has virtually agreed to sign a contract and which intends to continue negotiations with the Ministry of Power and Electrification of Uzbekistan.

The current picture of relations between the countries is not quite conventional: Although there are large investments, trade turnover has reached an adequate level. Trade turnover has doubled since 1993 to reach a level of 17 to 18 million pounds. The main imported products are grain, various manufactured goods, and equipment. From Uzbekistan, turnover mainly derives from nonferrous metals and cotton fiber which amount to 3 to 4 million pounds. The total trade turnover volume of slightly over 20 million pounds is a modest figure, but the positive processes taking place in Uzbekistan inspire optimism.

The specific feature of British investment is that companies are ready to invest their own funds. Take, for example, some companies in the tobacco industry and some banks which are preparing to give Uzbekistan direct credit.

There were 12 firms participating in the mission. If we speak about the concrete results, then one can note that some of them are at the phase in their negotiations when a deal turns into action. As regards joint activity, British firms intend to play a significant role in developing the infrastructure. Evidence of this was provided by meetings with the heads of the Railway Company and Uzbekistan Airways at which the reciprocal transportation of products, cargo loading equipment, and power engineering were discussed. The mission intends to make interested firms aware of matters relating to development of Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand, and Urgench airports.

The view was also expressed that it will make sense to process the republic's natural resources here. The experience that British businessmen have in the textile, oil, and gas industries will enable this work to become more active. In short, the British business world is continuing to focus on major investment projects.

The mission, composed of representatives of large, medium-sized, and small companies, was in our republic to look for foreign business partners who are reliable, viable, and capable of developing on a competitive basis.

UBCTI is intended to generate improvements in this process and help remove obstacles standing in its path. The next meeting, which is planned to be held in London in autumn this year, will represent another stage in the development of Uzbek-British economic relations.

Party Officials on Presidential Referendum

LD2603162395 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 25 Mar 95 p2

[Article by U. Kazachenko titled: "In the Name of Accord and Peace—A Roundtable Meeting Organized by NARODNOYE SLOVO"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Taking part in our discussion were Khalim Babayevich Babayev, a professor, doctor of legal sciences, deputy rector of Tashkent Law Institute, and secretary of the Political Council of the Adolat Social Democratic Party of Uzbekistan; Mikhail Leonidovich Elshov, the head of the analysis and forecasting

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unit of the Central Council of the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan; and Madaminkhuja Zakirhojayev, secretary of the Tashkent city committee of the Homeland Progress Party and the president of the ETU joint venture. [passage omitted]

[U. Kazachenko, NARODNOYE SLOVO correspondent] Khalim Babayevich, as one of the leaders of the Adolat party's Political Council, what can you say about your party's manifesto in light of the forthcoming referendum?

[Babayev] Social democracy, which has rich traditions all over the world, has always stood for social justice, fair distribution of wealth, and the supremacy and strict observance of the law. Our most important tasks are the consolidation of independence, the stable development of the state, and peace and tranquillity for its citizens. These tasks are similar to those consistently and unwaveringly implemented by President Karimov and which form the basis for the Supreme Council's activity. The whole of our work has thus been directed towards making fitting preparations for the referendum, the holding of which we support.

[Kazachenko] Mikhail Leonidovich, please come into the discussion and, as an analyst, try to forecast how the activity of your party—the most numerous one which has the biggest faction in parliament—will be altered if the people of our state take the decision to extend the president's term until the year 2000?

[Elshov] I can tell you that of course, the party's program of specific actions will not change. Having proclaimed socio-economic reforms for the good of the people, the party will pursue this aim unwaveringly by all political means. If the referendum produces a yes to an extension of the president's term of office, we will, of course, gain more opportunities to implement this program. We will thus have more opportunities to concentrate on resolving the main issues without being distracted by additional organizational aspects.

All I have said here comes from the party platform and from its practical activity. Now that the Supreme Council has been elected, parliamentary work also forms part of its activity. I think that it will play an increasingly substantial role.

[Kazachenko] Madaminkhuja, I would like you to talk about the Homeland Progress Party's activity in the light of the preparations for the forthcoming referendum.

[Zakirhojayev] A special resolution has been adopted on this matter. One of the basic tasks of the moment is to explain the goals and purposes of the referendum not only to the party's members but to the whole of the population, too. A plenary session of our party especially devoted to the forthcoming referendum also defined the scope for political work towards conducting the referendum. Taking into account the increasingly important role which the wards [mahalla] play, we have shifted our effort to that particular area. I think that due to this fact, our party's contribution to organizing actions on holding the referendum will be quite substantial. Incidentally, we have yet again been convinced of how important the ward is in people's lives, and how many issues can be solved effectively and competently on the basis of genuine democracy by appealing to the aksakals [elders], to residents of the wards, and to the nation.

Why have we actively backed the idea of holding the referendum?

The party, which has a fairly well-perfected democratic structure, naturally supported the idea of holding the referendum once it had analyzed the resolutions from the parliamentary session, and it came to the conclusion that they were entirely consistent with all the constitutional requirements. It has been correctly said here that only the people can decide such global historic matters. The members of parliament showed themselves to be wise and truly democratically-minded when they passed the resolution putting this issue to a nationwide referendum.

At the same time, when we study the platforms of other parties we can see that each of them regard diversity of principles and approaches as being of paramount importance, something which is also quite natural in a democratic state. [passage omitted]

Referendum Reveals Unanimous Support for Karimov

LD2703065095 Tashkent Radio Tashkent Network in Uzbek 0600 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A great historical event in the political life of our independent country—the nationwide referendum—has taken place.

First results show that our people have unanimously voted for the term of President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan to be extended from 1997 to 2000. [passage omitted]

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Armenia

OSCE Minsk Group Official Arrives in Yerevan

NC2503101895 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1502 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 24/03/95 NOYAN TAPAN—Co-Chairmen of the OSCE [Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk group for Mountainous Karabakh Anders Buerner [name as received] and Vladimir Kazimirov are expected to arrive in Yerevan late on March 24. According to the available information, on the same day they are to leave for Stepanakert. After visiting MKR [Republic of Mountainous Karabakh], the two Co-Chairmen will return to Armenia.

'New Elements' in Baku Karabakh Policy

954F1881B Yerevan RESPUBLIKA ARMENIYA in Russian 22 Mar 95 p 1

[Article by Karen Topchyan: "'New Elements' in Azerbaijan's Policy Demonstrate the Weakness of Baku's Position"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **In Moscow recently, I had an opportunity to meet a group of representatives of the Azerbaijani news media, who were astonishingly well informed as regards the viewpoint of their country's leadership on the further development of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations in the context of the Karabakh problem and Baku oil. In addition, my partners were very candid in what they had to say. I believe that these revelations reflect sufficiently accurately, in all likelihood, the official opinion and possible expectations of the Azerbaijani authorities.**

The arguments of my Baku colleagues are approximately as follows.

The settlement of the Karabakh conflict is entering a qualitatively new phase. This is connected with the fact that Western countries, the Western oil companies, it would be more correct to say, are displaying great interest in Baku's oil. And where there is oil, there is, as we all know, big policy. For this reason it cannot be maintained 100 percent today that Russia will achieve a dominating influence on the processes in the region.

The main question turns on the route of the oil pipeline. The countries on whose territory this pipeline will be laid from Baku to West Europe will dictate their terms in the geopolitical game. According to the scenario of the Western countries, if the pipeline passes through the Transcaucasus, that is, via Azerbaijan and Armenia (the Megri sector), this will be sufficient for strong leverage on the Armenian position on the Karabakh issue (but Armenia could then "press" also—K.T.).

Russia will, undoubtedly, never give up its interests in the Transcaucasus. It will always defend them in our region. But the point is that the situation has changed somewhat today. Following the agreement on credit billions with international financial organizations, Western investments have, finally, come to Russia. The signing of a trade agreement with the European Union is pending also. These factors could influence the Russian position in respect to the route of the oil pipeline to a considerable extent. It would be premature, therefore, to maintain that Russia's position will be inflexible on this issue. The West has many levers for influencing Moscow and putting the squeeze on it in the Transcaucasus. This has already, in fact, happened, incidentally: The signing of the oil contract last September between Azerbaijan and the Western consortium showed that Russia has clearly lost its importance in the Transcaucasus at the geopolitical and economic level.

At the time of the signing of the oil contract, when the question of the laying of the pipeline had still not been discussed, it was perfectly obvious that the West would insist on the oil pipeline running from Azerbaijan to Europe in circumvention of Russia. Information has appeared today that the Western countries are insisting that the pipeline be laid via Armenia and Turkey since they understand full well that Russia can, finally, be compelled to distance itself from Armenia and vice versa. After all, in this case Armenia would obtain the petrodollars that it sorely needs. In turn, this factor would lead to Armenia gaining a greater degree of freedom from Moscow and to it not being tied to it particularly. About this information that has appeared, incidentally: Quite recently, when he was in Baku, a high-level representative of the U.S. State Department openly recommended that the Azerbaijani leaders agree to the laying of the pipeline via Armenia. Turkey is leaning toward this scenario also. And were the latter, in addition, to lift its embargo on air transport crossing its territory in the direction of Armenia, the task would be simplified even more. Of course, your country would benefit also. In this case the Armenian leadership would have to weigh up rationally what it could lose in order to gain, that is, proceed from the well-known chess principle of "losing a little to win big." At least, there would be room for political maneuver. The laying of the oil pipeline via Armenia would contribute to the appearance of such maneuvers.

There is no doubt that the inauspicious geopolitical surroundings of Armenia and the stationing of Russian troops on its territory point to Yerevan's close attachment to Moscow, and you have no other options in choice of ally. We are talking in this case about Armenia acquiring a certain degree of freedom from Russia. And within the framework of this freedom it could maneuver quite boldly, both politically and economically. Although Russia has a mass of opportunities for influencing Armenia's position.

If your country were to agree to the "Armenian" route of the oil pipeline, this would hardly signify serious internal political cataclysms.

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The political will of the leaders of the countries of the Transcaucasus region—Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia—is paramount today. It is no secret that the fate of the oil contract depended only on the leadership of Azerbaijan. Even despite all the efforts made by Russia to thwart its signing. But such self-sufficiency and independence should, naturally, be within reasonable limits.

An improvement in Armenian-Turkish relations will depend exclusively on the desire of these countries. And there is no point motioning toward Russia (perhaps there is no point motioning toward Azerbaijan either—K.T.). It is well known that it would be to Moscow's advantage to keep Armenia isolated from Turkey. Of course, oil is an additional factor in the development of relations between the two neighbors. And the fact that Turkey has declared its intention to unblock your country's air space says a great deal. In this case the question is what Ankara will demand in exchange. All problems can be resolved at the negotiating table. The negotiating table is a kind of counter, where the sales assistant and the customer specify the price: One tries to beat it down, the other raises it.

Had Azerbaijan no interest, it would undoubtedly not agree to the laying of the oil pipeline via Armenia. Naturally, Baku is thus helping you to tackle global problems—energy resources and petrodollars. And this means a considerable amount of money. All this is also, naturally, in exchange for certain concessions on the Karabakh question. For if the oil pipeline were to run via Armenia, the latter would have no choice but to give up the controlled territories. Azerbaijan's consent to the "Armenian" version is not a sign of weakness. It is not a question of prestige. It is simply that this is the perfectly rational, sound normal approach of the businessmen who has calculated everything. The change in our country's position on this issue from sharply negative in the direction of its adoption has occurred, we believe, only because the position of Armenia itself on the question of Karabakh has changed. Were Baku officials sure that Yerevan would not agree to a return of the occupied territories in exchange for the pipeline, Azerbaijan would never agree to this scenario.

This is how Baku is thinking. It would seem to us, however, that the opinion that the position of the Armenian leadership in respect to Nagornyy Karabakh has changed on account of the possibility of the laying of a pipeline across our country does not correspond to reality. Of course, the "Armenian side" could and will be somewhat more flexible on the question of the controlled territories outside of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic proper. But this also is connected primarily with a solution of the problem of assurance of the security of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and its population. With its settlement Stepanakert could reiterate its well-known statement that it has no claims on territory outside of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

The assertions that Baku, alluding to the laying of the oil pipeline across the territory of Armenia, is playing the part of "thrifty merchant" are utterly wrong and of a patently propaganda nature. Such assertions are nothing other than attempts to put a brave face on things. It is a recognition of the hopelessness of the current situation that is dictating to Azerbaijan new approaches in its policy. After all, Baku's consent is unequivocally involuntary: Any other route for the laying of the oil pipeline is simply impracticable. This is understood in both Washington and Ankara, incidentally. And Moscow also has certainly weighed up this scenario. It will be very interesting to observe, evidently, how Baku officialdom will very shortly be forced to add to its "official" consent to the routing of the oil pipeline via Armenia its consent to the independence of Nagornyy Karabakh also. In this case such a scenario is simply inevitable. Unless this happens, Yerevan and Stepanakert will simply refuse to participate in realization of the "project of the century."

In a word, the new elements in Azerbaijan's policy are, most likely, an indicator not of strength and discretion but, on the contrary, of weakness and the hopelessness of the situation in which Baku officialdom has now found itself.

Grachev 'Satisfied' With Joint Exercise Preparation

NC2403212595 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1342 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 24/03/95 NOYAN TAPAN—On March 24, the Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev again visited Yerevan. Together with the President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan, he visited the training center, where Russian and Armenian troops are preparing for joint military exercises. Grachev was accompanied by the Commander of the Russian Forces stationed in Transcaucasus General-Major Fedor Reut, the Head of the Headquarters of the Russian troops deployed in Armenia General-Major Aleksey Tretyakov and other top brass. From the Armenian side, the Armenian State Minister Vazgen Sargisyan, the Defense Minister Serzh Sargisyan were present. Also Russian Ambassador to Armenia Andrey Urnov and Counselor of the Russian Embassy Yuriy Ivanov were present.

The Commander of the Russian Forces stationed in Transcaucasus General-Major Fedor Reut presented a schedule for tactical exercises. From the Russian side motorized infantry regiment and a division headquarters are expected to participate in the exercises. From the Armenian side motorized infantry regiments, artillery and aviation are to participate in the military exercises. Grachev underlined the necessity to organize interaction between the different types of troops and their administration.

The Armenian President and the Russian Defense Minister inspected the joint command post for control over the troops. Grachev, replying to journalists questions, said that he was satisfied with the level of preparation of the Russian and Armenian forces for joint military

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exercises within CIS framework and voiced confidence that they would be successful.

On the same Grachev left Yerevan.

Grachev Notes Chechen Lessons During Test Range Visit

LD2503004395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1346 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[FBIS Translated Text] Oktemberyan (Armenia), 24 Mar—Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan today visited the military test range located here upon which the Russian and Armenian armies will hold their first joint tactical exercises at the end of the month.

Lieutenant General Pavel Labutin, deputy commander of the group of Russian forces in the Caucasus, reported that 1,205 servicemen and 225 units of combat hardware would be involved in the exercise.

Everything is ready for the exercises—the theme of which is combat with subsequent transition to counter-attack—to be held. A large military camp has been established in the Ararat Valley. It includes tents, a command point, a battalion of medics, tank and vehicle parks, and rear services. A bakery is at work, producing aromatic bread. Officers are busy dashing about setting their units tasks. You can hear the hum of engines raising clouds of dust in the springtime sky.

"We are not aggressors, and we are waging a defensive action," the Russian defense minister said in conversation with officers and generals. According to Grachev, Soviet and, subsequently, Russian troops had long ceased to study combat in built-up areas. The operation in Chechnya had made this clear. "And we should definitely take this experience into consideration, written as it has been in blood," the general said.

The general put some leading questions to highly-placed representatives of the Armenian Army and was pleased at their replies.

The current working visit is linked to hearing reports by those who are directing the exercises on the progress of preparations for them, the minister told the ITAR-TASS correspondent. "This is the first time that an operation of this kind is being mounted in the CIS, and it is of great significance both politically and, more importantly, militarily," he said. "After this exercise, we will be stepping up our work with the military departments of the other countries of the CIS to prepare joint measures and so provide common security," Grachev added.

The Russian defense minister said he was pleased with the system of command points that had been deployed using experience gained in combat in Chechnya. In his opinion, the Russian and Armenian commanders were, on the whole, acting correctly, and the exercises could begin after a few days' preparation.

Foreign Minister Praises Russo-Armenian Relations

LD2603140095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1300 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Bukalov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rome March 26 TASS—Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan, currently here on a working visit, in an ITAR-TASS interview on Sunday, described Russo-Armenian relations at the present stage as stable and dynamically developing.

The talks held by Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev in Yerevan have become a new fruitful stage in the development of bilateral military cooperation, Papazyan said.

The accords, which were reached during Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan's recent visit to Moscow, on matters concerning the functioning of Russian military bases on Armenian territory, have been specified and legalised, the minister emphasised.

Papazyan's opinion is that the present-day relations between Armenia and Russia, including those in the field of defence, may serve as an example for many an ex-Soviet republic.

Defense Minister Views Russian Base Pact

954F1878A Yerevan VREMYA in Russian 22 Mar 95 pp 1-2

[Comments by politicians, including an interview with Serzh Sarkisyan by Eleonora Vartanyan; place and date not given: "Russian Military Base in Armenia. Mutual Trust Means Mutual Responsibility"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **So Boris Yeltsin and Levon Ter-Petrosyan have signed the treaty on the Russian military base. Serzh Sarkisyan, minister of defense of the Republic of Armenia, whom journalist Eleonora Vartanyan met, took part in the negotiations.**

[Vartanyan] Mr. Sarkisyan, a few words about the purpose of the signing of this document.

[Sarkisyan] The title of the document itself also defines its purpose—the regulation of questions of the presence of Russian troops on the territory of Armenia and their rights, duties, and, in civilian language, style of behavior on the one hand and our rights and duties in respect to the Russian troops in the Republic of Armenia on the other. I consider that this is a serious step en route to the building of an independent state. Mutual trust means mutual responsibility.... Whereas prior to this time we had no legislative acts limiting the actions of the Russian troops on the territory of Armenia, now we do have.

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[Vartanyan] Will the presence of the Russian military base affect in any way the Armenian Army, in which there are today so many problems?

[Sarkisyan] I do not believe that others will resolve our problems for us, but in addition to the main treaty Pavel Grachev, minister of defense of the Russian Federation, and I signed and will sign in the very near future a further 10 agreements. Some of them will pertain to interaction, some will once again legalize on the territory of the Republic of Armenia the activity of Russian troops. One agreement will provide for interaction in the sphere of science and technology. There is an air defense agreement, there will be an agreement on the training of specialists. In principle, various aspects of our Army life are encompassed whether we like it or not.

[Vartanyan] Will citizens of Armenia serve in Russian military units?

[Sarkisyan] They already do so and will continue to do so.

[Vartanyan] A military base in Armenia means expenditure, quite appreciable expenditure. Who will finance it? Russia alone?

[Sarkisyan] An agreement on financial matters has still to be signed, and we will proceed from the fact that Armenia is today, unfortunately, a poor country.

[Vartanyan] What is the difference between this treaty, which has merely to be discussed in parliament, and the previous version? As far as I remember, certain deputies had a number of complaints about it....

[Sarkisyan] If you are referring to the first version of this treaty, it contains very many changes. The proposals that we submitted were accepted by the Russian side, in the main. Our deputies should not have any complaints about the latter version signed by the presidents, since all their proposals have been taken into consideration.

* * *

Politicians comment on the event:

Ashot Navasardyan, chairman of the Republican Party of Armenia, deputy of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia.

The principles enshrined in the document that has been signed were approved by parliament. But the members of parliament had certain criticisms, of the majority of which I was the author, of the preliminary document proposed by the government. The fact that each party to the treaty reserved the right to denounce it without the consent of the other party seemed impermissible to me, in particular. That is, Russia could have withdrawn its troops any day, putting the republic's military authorities in a very difficult position. It is not hard to guess at the possible political consequences of such a turn of events. Another point was the fact that it was proposed transferring title to the territories occupied by the Russian military units to the latter. The deputies, however, insisted on temporary use. Both these changes were made to the document and, as far as I know, were taken into consideration in the final version of the treaty signed in Moscow.

The mere fact that Armenia is the first country on whose territory a Russian military base will be located says a great deal. I personally, as a politician and simply as an Armenian, would prefer Armenia to have military bases in other countries, not the other way about. But such are the realities. We are surrounded by neighbors posing a threat to our statehood. Considering this, no one today can say that the Moscow treaty was not necessary. It is obvious, after all, that international "perestroyka" is still far from completion and that things have not yet reached the point of a division of spheres of influence in the Transcaucasus.

Igor Muradyan, chairman of the Zharang national conservative club, deputy of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia and the parliament of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

Until most recently, the principle of Russian policy in the Transcaucasus was based on the parity of relations with all three republics. It became clear in time that this principle was without foundation. It is obvious today that Azerbaijan, having opted for a pro-Turkish orientation, will leave for the other military-political bloc. Georgia, for which it is possible to balance successfully between East and West, might also not be a dependable partner of Russia. Armenia, on the other hand, which is vitally interested in the reunification of its two parts, is not in a position to realize the tasks confronting it in the Western system of coordinates. This fact makes Armenia the sole state of the region, perhaps, capable of being Russia's ally.

The appearance of the treaty on Russian military bases in Armenia is a result of the fact that Moscow has recognized this. The document is based not only on a new principle of Russian foreign policy, but also on the more profound, sacral, I would say, aspect, defined by a deeper-lying factor. The divide in world politics runs along a line separating the world into states interested in fixing the present state borders and into states, peoples, and nations with no interest in this. In recent years the Russian establishment, political parties, national business figures, and the military- industrial complex have determined as their policy the revival of a united and strong Russia. More and more Russians consider themselves a divided nation, sympathizing with those who are making territorial claims on Ukraine, the Baltic states, and Kazakhstan. Considering this, we may today speak of the creation not simply of a military-political, but also of a cultural-ideological union. A new form of political civilization is appearing in the East.

It is highly significant that the people who signed this document are not supporters of the ideology about which

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I speak. On the contrary, it is customary to consider them supporters of a moderate-liberal ideology. So how has this happened? The point is that both in Russia and in Armenia, national interests today dominate all others. Both Russians and Armenians have proven capable of nationalizing any ideology. From this angle, the treaty signed in Moscow is an indication of a particular trend.

Eduard Simonyants, chief of the Office of State Reserves under the Government of the Republic of Armenia, former chairman of the State National Security Administration.

Quite an acceptable, civilized form determining the relationships of allied states on a large range of issues of mutual geopolitical and geo-strategic interest has been adopted. Any other form of the presence in our country of troops of a foreign state would be inappropriate. The conferment on the Russian Army units stationed in Armenia of military base status is testimony to the specific understanding of mutual interests in the military and military- political spheres. This is the form that makes it possible, without infringing the sovereignty of the states, to tackle this strategic and tactical task or the other, which does crop up in our case.

As far as the fact that Armenia is the first country that will have Russian military bases is concerned, this could be entirely fortuitous. The process of the settlement of mutual relations with Russia has been continuous and has logically led to such a form of solution of the question of our states' interaction in the sphere of collective security.

Additional work, which will have to be performed in two areas, is necessary, of course. The first is the filling of the treaty with specific content in the form of annexes to it regulating all nuances of the interaction. And the second is explanatory and propaganda work. There is a serious gap here, in my view. The population and even certain political circles have an insufficiently correct perception of what is happening. It is essential to get across to the people that the decision that has been adopted is a political decision and that it proceeds from the principles of our security.

Expenses Shared for Russian Military Base

NC2603165095 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 1152 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("LRAGIR" daily-PAST), 03/21/95—As we have already reported, Armenian and Russian Presidents recently signed an agreement about stationing a Russian military base in Armenia. The agreement will become valid after affirming by the parliament. According to the agreement the base may possibly participate in any military operations in case the commanders of both countries agree with this decision.

Presidential Acting Spokesperson L. Zurabyan and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs E. Zuloyan held a joint press conference dedicated to this question. Though the agreement has already been signed, there are several legal and financial problems which still need to be resolved.

It was particularly mentioned that Armenia will cover part of the expenses for keeping the base, but its share has not yet been defined. A separate agreement in this regard will be signed in the future.

Communists To Run Alone in Parliamentary Elections

NC2603165995 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 1152 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("Respublica Armenia" daily- NOYAN TAPAN), 03/24/95—Head of the Communist Party of Armenia Sergey Badalyan informed a NOYAN TAPAN reporter that his party will not become a member of "National Consent" union, but did not except the possibility of collaboration with other parties during the election campaign.

"We'll orient to closeness of principles of those parties to main topics in our election campaign", Mr. Badalyan said. He said these principles are reconstruction of a renewed socialism, establishing of links with Russia, creation of a new Union in which Armenia is to preserve its status as subject to international law.

Opposition Parties Stage Protest Meeting

954F1882A Yerevan GOLOS ARMENII in Russian 21 Mar 95 p 1

["Our own information": "The Final Say Is for the People"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest public meeting, convened by the Union for National Accord, was held last Friday. It was chaired by Shavarsh Kocharyan, and Grant Khachatryan, Paruyr Ayrikyan, Aram Sarkisyan, Seyran Avakyan, and Grayr Karapetyan spoke on behalf of their parties. The country has no constitution, and the existing laws are not being observed—this, perhaps, was the main thought that the speakers examined from various angles. Citizens' rights are being flouted in the country, and instead of the democracy that has been proclaimed, the ruling grouping has adopted a policy of the establishment of a strict authoritarian regime. The facts adduced in the speech of the well-known lawyer Ruben Saakyan, whom the procuracy of the republic has by an unlawful and arbitrary ruling prohibited from exercising his professional duty in defense of the interests of a number persons detained on suspicion of involvement in the secret Dro organization, were a graphic illustration of this. Subsequently, in order to somehow justify their actions, representatives of the power structures instituted on a patently contrived pretext criminal proceedings against the lawyer. We shall not adduce the details here, since the press has already addressed and will continue to address this subject. We would note merely that when lawyers begin to speak at

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public meetings, this is a very disturbing signal. Democratic principles are not operating, consequently, the court has ceased to be an authority ascertaining the truth, and the procuracy has become a victim and instrument of political games.

The persecution unleashed against the newspaper GOLOS ARMENII testifies to the unconcealed flouting of the law also. Shavarsh Kocharyan announced that by the time of the start of the meeting, several mini-buses and passenger cars carrying MVD officers had driven up to Press House. They were wearing bullet-proof vests. Once again, Kocharyan said, the pretext was, most likely, the out-of- favor newspaper—the authorities were evidently afraid of demonstrations of support on the part of those attending the public meeting. Especially since the opposition parties, the SNS [Union for National Accord] as a whole, and many prominent figures of our science and culture have expressed their attitude toward the terror unleashed by the authorities against the opposition and independent press, GOLOS ARMENII included.

As earlier, the speakers linked their hopes for changes in political life with the upcoming parliamentary elections. The meeting that was held will once again evoke in citizens of a pessimistic frame of mind a puzzled, "And what is to be done," and dissatisfaction that once again everything has been confined to words. It is hard to understand this position—what do our impatient citizens want? Uprising? Rebellion? A storming of citadels? But this would be contrary to our people's interests. It is necessary once for all to sever the chain of revolutionary shakeups and lead the country into a period of normal political life, when questions are decided by the legal democratic path. And the position occupied by the SNS testifies to political forces' sense of responsibility for the fate of the people and the state. On the other hand, the aggressiveness and intolerance being displayed by the authorities toward all manifestations of opposition is alarming. And if there is anything that could put the people beside themselves, it is this domestic policy, not speeches at public meetings.

The fact that together with public meetings of the SNS, the individual parties that are a part of it will also henceforward stage mass actions testifies that the opposition is putting the emphasis on elections. Specifically, the Dashnaktsutyun Armenian Revolutionary Front, the National Democratic Union, and the ONS-Kh [expansion not given] are preparing for such meetings in Theater Square. The curtailment of the activity of the Dashnaktsutyun and the ravaging of the news media are graphic confirmation that the authorities also attach to the elections considerable significance and are preparing for them without displaying the least punctiliousness in their choice of weapons. Escalations of the crude pressure on the part of the authorities are, most likely, to be expected in the coming months.

Of one thing there is no doubt—the country is at an impasse, and the democratic slogans of 1988 have been tossed onto the garbage heap. Honest elections ensuring for the people an unrestricted say are the only thing that could restore the equilibrium in society. Otherwise big upheavals and big losses await us. It would be good were this to be understood by the authorities, and it is absolutely essential that all citizens of the country understand this.

Internal Affairs Ministry Personnel Cuts

954F1881A Yerevan RESPUBLIKA ARMENIYA in Russian 22 Mar 95 p 1

[SNARK report: "Less Work for the Operatives"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A cutback in the number of officers of the operational structures has begun in the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and various security services. Rudik Ovakimyan, chief of staff of the MVD, maintains that this has been caused mainly by the reduction in the level of crime in the republic, as a consequence of which some officers of an operational profile have been made idle.

The specialists will not be left without work, however: It has been decided to fill with their help vacancies in other services of the ministry.

Azerbaijan

Aliyev Receives Ukrainian Governmental Delegation

NC2403184795 Baku TURAN in English 1206 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (March 24) TURAN—On March 23 President Aliyev received the governmental delegation of Ukraine headed by Vice-Premier and Defense Minister, Valeriy Shmarov.

The delegation arrived in Baku from abroad.

The necessity of intensification of bilateral relations was mentioned during the talk. Valeriy Shmarov mentioned that this meeting can be called the preparation to the summit.

He expressed delight of Ukrainian leadership with President Aliyev's overcoming the crisis in the country for the short period of time. "You showed as one must settle such crisis", Shmarov says.

President Aliyev said that on March 17 Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma called him and expressed his satisfaction with the crisis settlement.

Valeriy Shmarov said that the agreement on working up the agreement concerning goods exchange between the countries was reached during the meeting. Both parties expressed their intention to sign it in the near future. Valeriy Shmarov said that this agreement can be prepared for two weeks and signed during the visit of the Azeri delegation to Kiev. He also mentioned that the

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cooperation between the industries of both countries must be activized. For this purpose the talks between the ministries of machine-building are scheduled. The representative from Ukraine considers that prospective directions for cooperation are production of medical equipment and medicines, military and military-technical cooperation.

Valeriy Shmarov said that the cooperation between Ukraine and Azerbaijan in the practical sphere is normal and now one should establish political cooperation. For this purpose the meeting between both Presidents is expected to take place. "Exchange of embassies can serve the political platform for the bilateral cooperation", Shmarov said. He also said that Ukraine's interests in Azerbaijan have the geopolitical character.

President Aliyev said that Azerbaijan does not have embassies in the CIS-member states, except Russian Federation. "And Kiev will be the second city", Azeri President said. President Aliyev said that it is necessary to work out major economic agreement between Ukraine and Azerbaijan and sign it as soon as possible.

Shmarov, Aliyev Discuss Cooperation

LD2403163595 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1520 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baku—Valeriy Shmarov, Ukraine's deputy prime minister and minister of defence, who headed Ukraine's delegation at the international exhibition of armaments and military hardware "Idex-95" in the United Arab Emirates, has paid a working visit to Baku on his way back to Kiev.

Geydar Aliyev, president of the Azerbaijani Republic, received Valeriy Shmarov on 23 March. The two men discussed the issue of exchanging embassies between the two states and a draft agreement on trade and economic cooperation between Ukraine and Azerbaijan. Valeriy Shmarov also met the prime minister and the defense minister of the Azerbaijani Republic.

Kazimirov-Led OSCE Delegation Begins Work

NC2403185695 Baku TURAN in English 1206 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (March 24) TURAN—"The purpose of our visit to the region is to clear up the readiness of the parties to the resumption of the talks with constructive and flexible intentions and to signing of appropriate agreements within the framework of peaceful conflict settlement", the representative of Russia's co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Conference, Vladimir Kazimirov, told TURAN. He said that the Minsk Group wants to make sure that another round of the talks will not turn into fruitlessness discussions as it happened recently.

Vladimir Kazimirov said that the program of work in Baku was discussed during yesterday's talks between the OSCE delegation and the State Advisor for Foreign Affairs, Vafa Guluzade. "The issue of the organization character were discussed", Russian diplomat mentioned.

Today the OSCE representatives will meet with President Aliyev and Foreign Minister, Gasan Gasanov, and, probably, with the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Rasul Guliyev. Tomorrow or this evening the delegation plans to leave for Yerevan and Hankendi [Stepanakert]. Under the schedule of work, the delegation will arrive back in Baku on March 27.

Aliyev Meets With OSCE Mission

NC2503114795 Baku TURAN in English 2021 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (March 24) TURAN—Today the President Geydar Aliyev met with the co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk conference Vladimir Kazimirov and Anders Biewner. During the talks Geydar Aliyev noted that the issues concerning a settlement of the Armenian-Azeri conflict after the Budapest summit were not so successful. "The way to peace should be activated," said he. The president also expressed concern over the fact that the first meeting of the Minsk group in Moscow was resultless. Geydar Aliyev assured the representatives of the OSCE that Azerbaijan would do its best to achieve the goal. According to him, Azerbaijan is interested in putting an end to the situation "no war, no peace" and in signing the Major Political Agreement as soon as possible.

Swedish diplomat Anders Biewner noted that the main purpose of the visit was to inform about the danger which feel the Minsk group and the OSCE due to lack of any progress at the negotiations for the settlement of the conflict. Biewner said that a session of the 1st supreme body of the OSCE—the Supreme Council—is to take place next week, a concern over the state of the process on the settlement the Armenian-Azeri conflict will also be expressed. He stressed that during the present visit the delegation would like to clarify what prevent the settlement of the conflict.

Anders noted that it was not Azerbaijan's fault that the negotiations in Stockholm did not take place. According to him, it is necessary to determine such questions as the status of the delegations at the negotiations and the parallel negotiations in Bonn on humanitarian issues.

Biewner said that today in the morning a question on the mechanisms of localization the incidents in the cease-fire zone was discussed in the Defence Minister of Azerbaijan. He noted also the necessity of sending to the region a permanent representative of the functioning chairman of the OSCE. According to him, it would be reasonable for Azerbaijan to send its permanent representative of the OSCE to Vienna.

Vladimir Kazimirov spoke about soon resolution of the fate of hostages and war prisoners. He said that the exchange of hostages should be done according to the

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formula "all for all." According to him the most appropriate date is May 12—the anniversary of cease- fire.

Geydar Aliyev with pleasure accepted the information of the representatives of the OSCE. He said that a permanent representative of Azerbaijan in the OSCE would be appointed. The President noted that the exchange of hostages might take place even before the May 12.

Aliyev Backs OSCE Prisoner Exchange Idea

LD2403213395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1834 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev backed the idea of exchanging prisoners and hostages taken during the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict before May 12, 1995 (the first anniversary of the ceasefire).

The idea has been put forward by the OSCE representatives.

Today Aliyev told Swedish diplomat Anders Biewner and Russian diplomat Vladimir Kazimirov, the heads of the OSCE Minsk Group, that such exchange should have taken place much earlier.

Kazimirov said it would be more reasonable to exchange prisoners according to the system of "all for all." He said if Baku supported the formula it could also be discussed with Yerevan and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Aliyev said he regretted that the settlement of the conflict was not very fast. He said he hoped that the visit of the OSCE Minsk Group would accelerate the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

Aliyev said Azerbaijan was ready to maintain the ceasefire regime until a political agreement on a wide scale was signed. However, he added that Azerbaijan was in favor of freeing all occupied territories and establishing solid peace in the region.

He said he would appoint a permanent Azerbaijani representative to the OSCE today.

Biewner said one of the main purposes of the visit was to inform the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders of the concern of the OSCE and the Minsk Group about the lack of progress at talks for resolving the conflict. He added that Azerbaijan could not be blamed for such a situation

Deputy Premier Meets Iraqi Minister

JN2603082495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2130 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (INA)—Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Elchin Efendiyev received Abd-al-Mun im Ahmad Salih, [Iraqi] minister of awqaf and religious affairs, and his delegation, who are currently visiting Baku.

Discussions dealt with bilateral relations of cooperation in the cultural and religious fields in a manner that serves the interests of the two friendly peoples.

Afendiyev expressed the eagerness of his country and government to develop and enhance relations of friendship and cooperation with Iraq, and called for lifting the economic siege and ending the suffering of the Iraqi people as soon as possible.

The [Iraqi] minister also met with the Azerbajaini minister of higher education and discussed with her relations of cooperation in the cultural and scientific fields. The Azerbaijani official expressed pride in and a desire to develop cultural and scientific cooperation and implement the protocols signed by the two countries.

The Iraqi minister and his delegation visited the Azerbaijani Sciences Academy and discussed with the officials there developing and strengthening relations between the Iraqi and Azerbaijani scientific establishments.

National Assembly Resolution on 'Coup' Attempt

NC2503045595 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1740 GMT 23 Mar 95

[Resolution issued by the Azerbaijan National Assembly, dated 23 March; read by unidentified speaker from the Assembly podium—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Broadcast in progress] Regarding President Geydar Aliyev's official visit to a foreign country as a good opportunity, the rebels attempted to stage a coup. The OPON [Special Purpose Police Detachment] group in Kazakh District, which had engaged in smuggling fuel and other materials for a long time, ousted the administrative organs in Kazakh and then attacked one of the military units in the area on the night of 12-13 March. The group seized five armored vehicles and then ousted the administrative officials in Akstafa District. The group seized 600 firearms and three vehicles, freed 16 detained persons from the penitentiary of the Akstafa Internal Affairs Department, and damaged the administrative buildings. The freed detainees later joined them. The OPON group planned to move against the other districts and stage a coup in Baku.

Rovshan Javadov traveled to the region together with several leading state officials, including several high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to find a peaceful way to end the incidents. However, he adopted a provocative approach and returned to Baku by himself. The armed group attacked the military unit in Tauz District in an attempt to seize control of Tauz and Ganja Districts on the night of 13-14 March. The group was destroyed in the clashes. Some 160 of its members were sent to prison. Some 243 automatic weapons, a large quantity of [word indistinct] rifles, many mortar shells and mortars, other combat material, two tanks,

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two armored vehicles, three trucks, [words indistinct], and 13 automobiles were seized from them.

Rovshan Javadov joined the OPON unit based in Baku's Eighth Kilometer District when he returned from Kazakh. He prepared the unit to continue the armed coup attempt. OPON members Ali Aliyev and Ilgar Mamedov wounded Fahrettin Guliyev, deputy head of the Administration of the Supreme Administrative Organs, near the National Assembly on 14 March. They were arrested and disarmed. Illegal automatic weapons, mortars, and ammunition were discovered in their possession and in the possession of one of their relatives.

Continuing the lawless activities of the OPON units and the Javadov brothers, some 50 OPON members launched an armed attack on the police post in Baku's Nizami District on 15 March. Two of the staff at the police post were wounded attempting to counter the attack. An operation was carried out by the units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to arrest Mahir Javadov for the crimes he had committed. However, Javadov and some 40 to 50 OPON members resisted these units. He kidnapped the other people who lived in that building and fired a grenade launcher from the seventh story. Eight policemen and two servicemen were wounded in the incident. He later left the building. Two Mercedes cars, one jeep, some grenade launchers, automatic firearms, and military equipment were discovered in Javadov's garage and seized.

Speaking on television on 15 March, President Geydar Aliyev urged Rovshan Javadov, his group, and his internal and external supporters who were encouraging him to continue his activities, to spare Azerbaijan more destruction and bloodshed. He urged them to realize that it is essential to safeguarding Azerbaijan's state structure and told them that they would be forgiven and jobs would be found for them if the OPON members ended their activities and surrendered their arms.

On 16 March Aliyev issued a decree confirming his appeal. Aliyev received Shakhmuradov, commander of the OPON, and Jafarov, deputy commander of the OPON, on 16 March. He explained to them that the OPON must lay down its arms and refrain from criminal activities. That, he said, is essential.

However, the efforts by all the available means to avoid further incidents were fruitless. Rovshan Javadov intensified his coup preparations. He held talks with Mafia members and individuals involved in politics. Furthermore, he informed the local and foreign media organs that he wished to replace the leading officials in Azerbaijan by force, would not hesitate to use fratricide to achieve his objectives, and would establish and head a military council—that is, an unconstitutional institution—after taking over the administration. He also informed them that he would invite representatives from the political parties to take part in that institution. Meanwhile, Rovshan Javadov's father, Bakhtar Javadov, appealed to him on 16 March to remain loyal to the state and refrain from following the instructions of those who promote their own personal interests. Javadov's response indicated that he had lost his sense of ethical behavior.

Rovshan Javadov and his colleagues divided their supporters into four groups to stage a coup on the night of 16 March. They instructed them to occupy the presidency and kill or imprison the president, the building which houses the Azerbaijan National Assembly, the installations of the Azerbaijan State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. OPON units armed with heavy machine guns and other types of arms took up position in groups of 15 to 20 men in the nearby houses, schools, and rooftops. They placed the area under their control.

Resolute measures were needed to preserve Azerbaijan's sovereignty, guard the republic's interests, safeguard the people's security, maintain law and order, and counter the armed attack. In accordance with Article 10 of the main law on the imposition of a state of emergency, Article 1 of the law on the establishment of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces, and Article 10 of the law on the defense of Azerbaijan, measures were taken to isolate the area where the OPON units had taken up positions and to counter any possible attack by them.

The OPON units attacked at about 0200 on 17 March. Four military servicemen were killed in the initial attack. They continued to fire with all the firearms in their possession. The government forces were forced to take action at about 0400. They moved to silence the OPON positions. Considering the call by the OPON units for a cease-fire, which later proved to be a ruse, the government forces ceased firing. However, the OPON units later resumed firing, killing an officer who was approaching their positions. The government forces resumed their legal actions and forced the OPON units to either surrender or flee.

Some 208 automatic firearms, 27 machine guns of various types, 13 mortars, two grenade launchers, four rocket launchers, five antitank guided missiles, 10 Zenith launchers, a 30-mm artillery piece, two crates of artillery equipment, two KAMAZ vehicles, 30 pieces communications gear of various types, four vehicles used by the OPON headquarters, 36 military vehicles, a large quantity of other combat equipment and military material, 19 automobiles—including two Mercedes, an Audi, a Peugeot, and an Opel—and a large quantity of food were seized from the OPON units.

Javadov and his criminal intentions were supported by the Azerbaijani People's Front, the Boz Gurd [Grey Wolf] Party, and other organizations. They took organizational measures to give moral, material, and armed support to them. Some 400 armed men, including several members of the Boz Gurd Party, the Hudu Mamedov Charity Society, and other organizations, were seen at the OPON base on the night of 16 March. It was established that the military units supporting Suret

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Guseynov rallied around his relative, Keramet Kerimov, who had actively participated in the attempted coup on 4 October 1994 and who now lives in Georgia. They waited for Rovshan Javadov's instructions.

Ayaz Mutalibov and Suret Guseynov were constantly in touch with Rovshan Javadov and Mahir Javadov during the incidents. They disclosed that they had waited for the time when they would be able to return to Azerbaijan to take over the national leadership. However, the terrorist and other criminal activities were obstructed as a result of the wise and prudent work of the republic's officials headed by President Geydar Aliyev. Their effort has safeguarded Azerbaijan's independence and state structure, despite the bloodshed that has taken place and the blow the criminal activities have inflicted to the republic. Furthermore, it has proved that Azerbaijan is a steadfast and strong country and that lawless activities and the use of force are fruitless. All that demonstrates the people's awareness, strong sense of national solidarity, faith, and confidence in the state. It also indicates the strength of the democratic principles in the republic and the fact that unconstitutional and lawless activities are inadmissible.

The Azerbaijan National Assembly calls on the republic's citizens and their political and social organizations to unite and act with a sense of national solidarity to strengthen Azerbaijan's independence, improve its democracy, and maintain its stability, actively contribute to the rapid exposure of forces that act with ill intent, and to spare no effort in strengthening Azerbaijan's might and influence. Therefore, the Azerbaijan National Assembly decides the following:

1. The use of force by the OPON units and their supporters to take over the administration from 12 to 17 March is regarded as a premeditated coup attempt, which was a continuation of the incidents that took place from 2 to 4 October. That it be placed on record that the coup attempt was jointly prepared by malicious internal and external forces, that Rovshan Javadov, Mahir Javadov, [name indistinct], and others were the main elements who carried out the attempt, that Ayaz Mutalibov and [name indistinct] provoked and encouraged them, and that the Azerbaijan People's Front, the Boz Gurd Party, and several other organizations were directly or indirectly involved in the coup attempt.

2. The decision by the leaders of the republic under extreme conditions to use all available means to find a peaceful way to normalize the situation is hereby approved. Let it be noted that Paragraph 4 of the president's decree, dated 4 October 1994, on the imposition of a state of emergency regime in Baku outlined that the state of emergency was thereby imposed by the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Ministry of National Security, and the Azerbaijan National Assembly approved the decree on 5 October 1994. That state of emergency is still in force, and the military forces have been used to safeguard Azerbaijan's sovereignty and interests in accordance with the law on the establishment of the armed forces and the Constitution's provisions on the imposition of a state of emergency, the status of Azerbaijan's military forces, and the defense of the republic. The resistance to the rebellion was in accordance with the methods and means that have been approved to obstruct armed rebellions and assassination attempts, and the officials have successfully fulfilled their duties.

3. Several organizations and mass media aim to change the constitutional order. Consequently, they have been involved in lawless activities. That state of affairs violates the Constitution and the laws on the political parties, social organizations, and mass media. Therefore, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Information and Press are asked to take legal steps against them.

4. The adoption of laws to implement reforms in the judicial system, clarify the status of the law enforcement organs, [words indistinct], enforce the provisions that safeguard the state, and implement the rules and regulations for the maintenance of law and order are deemed essential. The Azerbaijan National Assembly's permanent committees and the National Assembly Secretariat must expeditiously work with the pertinent organizations to accomplish all this.

5. The Azerbaijan Procurator's Office is asked to quickly establish the identities of those who organized and participated in the activities that led to the incidents that took place from 2 to 4 October 1994 and from 12 to 17 March 1995. The Procurator's Office is also asked to quickly identify the elements who fled after being involved in the assassination attempts. Their supporters must also be identified and the responsible elements must be forced to pay the price for the harm that has been done to the state. The Procurator's Office must take measures to systematically inform the National Assembly on the progress of the investigation.

6. The officials who fulfilled their duty to the people during the coup attempt are to be rewarded. Measures are to be taken to care for the families of the military men and innocent people who were killed in the clashes. The same applies to the wounded troops. The improvement of the work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Defense, and other state organs and the appointment of capable cadres with high moral qualities is deemed essential. Considering the agreement between Russia and Azerbaijan on legal cooperation, the Russian Federation Council and State Duma are urged to facilitate the return of the Azerbaijani citizens who have committed crimes in Azerbaijan in the past and who are now living in Russia.

Justice Ministry Decides To Liquidate 'Boz Gurd'

NC2503120495 Baku TURAN in English 2021 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (March 24) TURAN—"According to the application of the Minister of

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National Security, the Prosecutor of the republic, and other sessions held in the presidential office and in the parliament one can come to conclusion that Boz Gurd party took part in the attempt of coup d'etat on 17 March," TURAN was told by first Deputy Minister of Justice Sudaba Gasanova. (It is known that the other day leader of Boz Gurd party Iskender Gamidov was deprived of the deputy immunity and was arrested.)

Sudaba Gasanova said that on 23 March the Board of the Ministry of Justice made a decision to liquidate Boz Gurd party and sent the relevant documents to the Supreme Council.

Responding the question if the Ministry of Justice is going to liquidate the other parties Hasanova said that if the Prosecutory office has the information proving the participation of any political parties in the attempt of coup d'etat, the Ministry will determine the level of responsibility of these organisations.

Minister of National Security and Interior Minister, as well as the General Prosecutor stated more than once that lately members of Boz Gurd took part in the fights against the governmental troops, supported OPON and delivered arms to the base of OPON in the 8th kilometre.

Baku Prohibits Popular Front Party To Hold Congress

LD2503152295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1439 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, Mar 25 (Interfax)—The commandant of the city of Baku prohibited the Popular Front of Azerbaijan - a major opposition organization in the country - to hold its third congress on Saturday [25 March], sources in the local law-enforcement agencies told Interfax.

The commandant's office motivated its decision with the circumstance that the state-of-emergency regime forbids mass actions in the country.

The Front's deputy chairman Asim Mollazade told newsmen in Baku on Saturday that this step "has political character and is part of a campaign of repression launched against the democratic opposition and the free press in the wake of the recent bloody developments."

According to him, the authorities banned the main opposition newspaper - Azadlyg - and detained several journalists, members of the editorial staff of the Front's newspaper Jumhuriyet among them.

As Mollazade said, his party intends to request the commandant of Baku to allow it to hold its congress on April 7.

Today's forum was to be attended by Azerbaijan's ex-president Abulfas Elchibei, who now lives in his native village of Keleki in the Nakhichevan Republic.

Georgia

Shevardnadze on Russian Military Base Agreement

LD2403164195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1355 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, Mar 24 (Interfax)—In a comment on the March-22 initialing of documents on Russian-Georgian cooperation in the military field, Eduard Shevardnadze told newsmen in Tbilisi Friday [24 March] that he appreciates the Russian army's presence in Georgia.

Nonetheless, "the status quo could change now that Russia is anxious to fit into Europe and might eventually join the North Atlantic Alliance."

If relations with Russia aggravate, the Georgian parliament is free to declare the agreement on army bases null and void and suggest the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Georgia, Shevardnadze said.

The top leaders of Russia and Georgia can be expected to sign the agreement only after Georgian law is binding for all of Georgia.

Chairman of the Security and Defense Commission of the Georgian Parliament Nodar Natadze views the initialed documents as unacceptable. Twenty five or more years of Russian army presence translates into "the victimization of Georgia," he told Interfax Friday.

Defense Ministry on Russian Military Bases

LD2403193395 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1800 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement by the Defense Ministry press service. An inaccurate piece of information has been circulated among the public in connection with the deployment of the Russian Federation's four military bases on the Georgian territory. The names of installations—allegedly to be handed over to the Russian bases—are being mentioned. The Defense Ministry press service declares that the list of the installations to be handed over to the Russian military is to be amplified and that a special commission is working on it. The results will be published in the near future.

This was a statement by the Defense Ministry press service.

Russian-Georgian Military Agreement Viewed

MM2703114095 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 95 First Edition p 6

[Report by Mikhail Shchipanov: "Return to Base; Russian-Georgian Agreement on Military Establishments Has Essentially Become Global Compromise"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since Khrushchev's time there has not been a more current political slogan in Moscow

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than the struggle to eliminate foreign military bases which used to form a semi-circle around the Soviet Union's territory during the Cold War. Now Russia itself is signing interstate agreements on the imminent deployment of its own military establishments abroad. But Russian bases are being created not alongside another potential enemy but on our own borders in the "soft Russian underbelly" where complications threaten to raise the temperature in Russia itself.

Without doubt since the Russian and Armenian presidents signed the treaty on the deployment of the Russian military base in the Armenian city of Gyumri Pavel Grachev has found it easier to conduct talks with Eduard Shevardnadze: An important precedent was created. It is another matter that as in the case of Armenia initially Tbilisi preferred to harbor Russian bases only for the traditional five-year period. Actually, it has become known that this deadline was even "aired" by the president in the Georgian parliament, where there are still plenty of people who like to lend an excessive patriotic pathos to any debates, particularly those affecting relations with Russia. So when, as a result of Pavel Grachev's prolonged dialogue with the Georgian leadership, it became clear that the treaty would in fact be signed for 25 years, many observers set about seeking explanations for this far-reaching concession on Tbilisi's part.

Yet it would be more correct to talk not of a concession, still less of tough Russian pressure on the far from prosperous Georgia, but of a global compromise achieved to universal satisfaction, so to speak.

Indeed, the Russian representatives, of the highest rank, frequently stressed their adherence to the principle of Georgia's territorial integrity. But this time the Russian defense minister not only repeated the incantations dear to the Georgian heart, merely allowing the possibility of the approval of the republic's federative structure [sentence as published]

In the actual text of the agreement the list of four Russian military bases includes the entirely Abkhazian city of Gudauta, which for a long time served as the main bulwark of the supporters of Abkhazian leader Ardzinba. Thus Russia has created a precedent of very great importance for Georgia's interests, agreeing with Tbilisi the question of the permanent basing of its troops formally on Abkhazian territory. Without doubt this clause of the document initialed by Pavel Grachev and his Georgian counterpart Vardiko Nadibaidze could have a favorable and even appeasing effect on the most intransigent opposition members in the Georgian parliament, who in their diatribes constantly ascribe to Moscow clandestine and overt support for Abkhazian separatism.

Thus Grachev's trip to the Transcaucasus was not only a military one but also fully diplomatic. Which is particularly important when you consider the very tangled knot of local problems. Incidentally, it is not ruled out that Tbilis is now assessing with particular passion the results of Grachev's visit to Armenia. After all, if the treaty with Georgia has only just been agreed, so to speak, in Yerevan the Russian minister was engaged in filling with specific content military cooperation documents which have already been signed.

Military-Political Accord With Russia Splits Parliament

LD2403213595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2030 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tbilisi March 24 TASS—The Georgian Parliament today gave a mixed reception to the announcement that Georgian Defence Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze had initialed, together with his Russian counterpart Pavel Grachev documents on military- political cooperation between the two countries, which provide, in particular, for the stationing of Russian military bases on Georgian territory.

The largest opposition group in parliament "the Republicans" described the accord as "infringing the interests of Georgia" and called for sacking Vardiko Nadibaidze as defence minister. The group also called for sending the Russian peacekeeping force out of Abkhazia directly after its mandate for presence in the region expires on May 15.

A majority, however, supported Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's policy of strengthening goodneigbourly relations with Russia by walking out of the house and leaving the opposition without a quorum. The opposition motion could not be put to a vote or even for discussion.

Eduard Shevardnadze was not present.

Resignation of Security Service Chief Demanded

LD2403145095 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1405 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi (IPRINDA)—At a parliament session on 24 March, Nodar Natadze, one of the leaders of the United Republican Party, demanded the resignation of Georgian Defense Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze. Deputy Irina Sarishvili-Chanturia demanded the resignation of Security Service Chief Igor Giorgadze. During the break in the parliamentary session, the opposition adopted a decision to demand, first of all, Giorgadze's resignation. Both the majority and the opposition were unanimous in their demand for this.

In the words of Deputy Irina Sarishvili-Chanturia, if Giorgadze's resignation is not accepted today, then it will have heavy consequences. In the opinion of the deputies from the parliamentary majority, Giorgadze caused a confrontation in Ajara and slandered some of the deputies.

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Deputy Tengiz Sigua thinks that Shevardnadze is getting ready to announce a state of emergency and disband parliament.

Deputy Speaker Vakhtang Rcheulishvili said that the issue of Giorgadze's resignation will be discussed only in the presence of the Security Service chief.

Grachev Holds 'Confidential' Talks With Abkhaz Leader

LD2603084195 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Pavel Grachev has held confidential talks with the leader of Abkhazia Vladislav Ardzinba.

Possibilities for settling the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict and the question of the presence of Russian peacekeeping forces in the republic were discussed at a meeting in Sochi.

The day before, during his trip around the Caucasus, the Russian defence minister met Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the Georgian state, and Levon Ter-Petrosyan, president of Armenia.

Struggle To Run Adzharia Oil, Gas Viewed

954F1888A Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No 15, 26 Feb-5 Mar 95 p 10

[Report by Akakiy Mikadze under the "Eurasia" heading: "Georgia: A War Over Patrimony"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Another confrontation in the struggle for power is on between Tbilisi and Batumi. After the MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI material (No. 11, 1995, "The Adzharia Spring"), back room intrigues have grown into open confrontation. Chairman of the Adzharia Supreme Council Aslan Abashidze sent a high-level delegation to Tbilisi. He is incensed by the actions of the Republic of Georgia chief of security Igor Georgadze. Georgadze, meanwhile, and with him all enforcement ministers, led by their supervisory deputy prime minister, Avtandil Margiani, flew to Moscow. The purpose of their visit is to "persuade" the Russian mass media to repudiate the Adzharian leader's accusations that Georgian special services are preparing a terrorist act to remove him. While the Georgian ministers were in Moscow, Eduard Shevardnadze, having listened to the Adzharian delegation, said: "If the facts cited in the Moscow newspapers are confirmed, I cannot keep terrorists in my entourage."

It was only two years ago that Aslan Abashidze and Igor Georgadze were friends. Georgadze, at the time chief of the army counterintelligence, and chairman of the Adzharia Supreme Council Abashidze did not hide their liking of the Russian top brass.

The high point in testing the friendship between Georgadze and Abashidze was August 1993, when a civil war began in West Georgia. Let us remind our readers that the headquarters of Gamsakhurdia supporters were in Adzharia, and Abashidze himself commanded their operations. Georgadze played a special role at "headquarters." He trained Loti Kobalia, the former president's chief military commander. It was at that time that rumors began to circulate that Abashidze could become a real rival of Shevardnadze. The reverberation of these events echoed in the sensational speech of Georgia's General Procurator, Nedo Tenidze, in the parliament. The procurator said then that he personally had met in Batumi with Abashidze and Kobalia in the presence of Vladimir Semenov, commander of Russia's ground troops. And that Semenov had said that Soviet generals would not forgive Shevardnadze for the disintegration of the Union and would return Georgia to Russia's bosom, and named Abashidze as Shevardnadze's successor. However, after Tbilisi's defeat in the Abkhazian war, the situation changed. The Georgian leader made a decision for the republic to join the CIS, in return asking for Russian aid—the marines to guard strategic facilities in West Georgia. In return, Moscow demanded appointing the "right" people as enforcement ministers. After this agreement, Aslan Abashidze found himself out of the game. Igor Georgadze, on the other hand, was suddenly elevated and became security service chief.

But the time of a break between Georgadze and Abashidze has not yet arrived. On the contrary, as a sign of appreciation the security chief received an armored Cadillac as a gift from Batumi. The "gift" did not help, however. Georgadze's people soon arrested Loti Kobalia. And immediately the local press began to quote him as saying that Abashidze had armed Zviadist detachments. In parallel, Georgadze himself began a campaign against his friend, saying at meetings held by Shevardnadze that Adzharia had become the hub of drug business, Russian arms sales, and illegal export of Chechen oil.

Neither did Abashidze remain idle. Being aware that he could become a scapegoat for Tbilisi, he was intensively building up a lobby in the Moscow mass media. Through his representatives in Moscow, for instance, Abashidze connected with a well-known producer, Yuriy Ayzenshpis, who pushed through his connections a series of promotional publications.

Meanwhile, Shevardnadze is maneuvering between the two antagonists. Igor Georgadze was recently promoted to lieutenant general. At the same time, by Shevardnadze's decree Adzharia was granted the status of a free economic zone. In a way, the head of the state's actions fuel the heat of the confrontation. A race is as to who will be the ultimate winner.

General Fedor Reut, the GRVZ [Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus] commander, formerly Abashidze's friend, has clearly cooled to him. In order to break all

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ties, Reut dismissed General Gladyshev, commander of the ground troops division stationed in Batumi. Gladyshev was Abashidze's last shield. There is also an economic reason for this interest in Adzharia—large reserves of oil and gas have been found near the Batumi coast. Batumi also remains for the Transcaucasus republics the only transit point to Turkey. One can predict that the struggle for dividing the spheres of influence in Adzharia will continue. And most likely the winner will be whoever plays best to Moscow's tune.

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Estonia

Russian Citizen 'Forcibly Deported' to Russia

LD2403190995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1755 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tallinn, 24 Mar—A precedent has been created in Estonia, unknown in the history of that state: A permanent resident of Tallinn—a Russian—has been forcibly deported to Russia. This evening the police put Petr Rozhok on a train for Moscow following the expiry of the injunction of the Department of Citizenship and Migration, in accordance with which the Russian was given 24 hours to leave Estonia voluntarily.

Russian Envoy: Ties 'Seriously Damaged'

WS2703115195 Tallinn BNS in English 1905 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Mar 25, BNS—The Russian Embassy in Tallinn is of the opinion that Pyotr Rozhok's deportation from Estonia contradicts Estonian laws and will seriously damage Estonian-Russian relations.

Russian Ambassador to Estonia Alexander Trofimov told BNS he discussed Rozhok's deportation on Thursday with Justice Minister Juri Adams and Interior Minister Kaido Kama, and on Friday, with Foreign Minister Juri Luik, informing them he protested resolutely against "arbitrary actions of officials."

Trofimov told Estonian ministers Rozhok's deportation would bring "most negative consequences" in Estonian-Russian relations. "Unfortunately, the Estonian side showed no understanding," the ambassador stated.

The Russian State Duma (lower house of parliament) on Friday urged President Boris Yeltsin to impose economic sanctions on Estonia after the Citizenship and Migration Department ordered Rozhok, representative of ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party in this Baltic republic, to leave the country.

Vasily Ostapchuk, an adviser with the Russian Embassy, told BNS the citizenship department's expulsion order contradicted the laws referred to in its text.

For example, the administrative violations code says an expulsion order can be appealed within 10 days of the relevant court ruling: this means that a decision to deport somebody can only be made by court, not by the citizenship department, Ostapchuk claimed.

Rozhok's wife filed Friday an appeal against the order with the Tallinn City Court.

The Citizenship and Migration Department accused Zhirinovskiy's man in Estonia of violating the constitution, the aliens law, and the administrative violations code. Ostapchuk said the department had not produced proof of any violations on Rozhok's part.

The Russian Embassy adviser also pointed out that the expulsion order nullified Rozhok's residence and work permits, but that actually he never had and did not intend to apply for them on principle.

Rozhok had been living in Estonia since 1958 and was registered as a permanent resident which under the aliens law entitled him to stay in the country without a residence permit until the summer of 1996.

Ostapchuk maintained Rozhok's deportation was a purely political matter in which laws got chucked overboard.

He emphasized that Russian authorities and embassy were standing up for Rozhok, not as a representative of Zhirinovskiy's, but as a Russian citizen whose deportation "set a precedent." He also said he had received numerous phone calls from Russian citizens living in Estonia who were apprehensive they, too, might be deported from the country. More than 60,000 ethnic Russians living in Estonia have opted for Russian citizenship.

Ministry 'Refutes' Russian Protest

WS2703114395 Tallinn Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release in English 2123 GMT 26 Mar 95

["Estonian Foreign Ministry Statement" issued in Tallinn on 26 March]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On 25 March, 1995, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement protesting Estonia's expulsion the previous day of Mr. Pyotr Rozhok, an ultranationalist and anti-Semitic representative of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Russian Liberal Democratic Party. The Russian Foreign Ministry statement alleged, among other things, that Mr. Rozhok's expulsion was a "gross violation of the legal rights of Russian citizens living in Estonia" and that Estonian authorities are interested in worsening relations with Russia.

The Estonian Foreign Ministry calls attention to the fact Mr. Rozhok was not expelled from Estonia because he is Russian but because he actively worked against Estonia's constitutional order as well as incited intolerance and ethnic hatred. Expulsion for these reasons is a completely normal procedure that occurs when citizens of other countries do not respect the laws of the country in which they reside. Estonia has been compelled to order citizens of other countries as well to leave Estonia, therefore Mr. Rozhok's expulsion does not constitute a precedent of any kind.

With regard to Mr. Rozhok's anti-Jewish statements, Estonia calls on Russia to work together to combat anti-Semitism. The Ministry welcomes the remarks of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on 20 March in Paris at the Conference on European Stability, where Mr. Kozyrev said that "Nothing is more repugnant than anti-Semitism." The Ministry also recalls Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decree of 23 March ordering a clampdown

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against the threat of fascism and political extremism. Both of these actions are parallel with Estonia's own efforts against anti-Semitism.

The Ministry strongly refutes claims that Estonia is seeking to harm bilateral relations with Russia. Since the withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonia on 31 August 1994, Estonia has consciously embarked upon a policy of Positive Engagement with Russia. Estonia recognizes that both Russia and Estonia face an historic opportunity to improve relations, but notes that such an effort must be mutual, including jointly working against the kind of extremist thinking that Mr. Rozhok represents.

The Ministry draws attention to the fact that Mr. Rozhok has a guaranteed right to contest his expulsion through Estonia's Administrative Court while residing in Russia. The Ministry also notes that Mr. Rozhok was ordered to leave Estonia only after repeated warnings during the last several years to cease his activities. When he refused to do so, Rozhok was expelled on 24 March under police guard and with the presence of Russian embassy consular personnel, and reached Moscow yesterday.

Luik on Rozhok Interest 'Propaganda Value'

WS2703123095 Tallinn BNS in English 1030 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Mar 27, BNS—Russian authorities' interest in Pyotr Rozhok, the activist of the ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party who was deported from Estonia, extends only as far as the case has propaganda value, Estonian Foreign Minister Juri Luik told BNS.

"The decision of the Russian parliament to consider applying economic sanctions against Estonia was made in a somewhat nervous atmosphere and obviously not knowing all facts under pressure from the Russian Liberal Democratic Party," he said.

When the Russian leadership find out who exactly Rozhok is and what kind of statements he has made about both Estonian and Russian leaders, they'll probably come to a better understanding of why he was ordered to leave the Baltic republic, the foreign minister claimed.

"Perhaps there are political forces in Russia on the eve of parliamentary elections that want to make a concrete case serve their own political interests, but I don't think that's particularly sensible," Luik noted.

In Luik's opinion, Russia shouldn't take any steps with regard to Estonia. "If Russia had had to deal with a (similarly behaving) Estonian citizen (living) in Russia, he would obviously have been ordered unhesitatingly out of the country and that would have been the end of it," he added.

The foreign minister said Rozhok has the right to appeal against the expulsion order and if the court finds that Estonian authorities were in the wrong he'll be able to return to Estonia.

Luik compared Estonian-Russian relations to a ship in stormy seas. Some unimportant matter may sometimes worsen relations because of lack of mutual trust, he said.

Rozhok Receives 'Cool Reception'

WS2703115395 Tallinn BNS in English 1412 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Mar 25, BNS—Pyotr Rozhok, representative of Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party in Estonia who was Friday [24 March] in Tallinn put on a train headed for Russia, arrived Saturday morning in Moscow. The Russian capital gave the "hero of anti-fascist struggle in Estonia" a cool reception. Neither his fellow party members, supporters, nor the media had turned up. He was met only by a former deputy to Estonia's Soviet-era parliament, the Supreme Council, and a Russian repatriate from Estonia.

Obviously disappointed, Rozhok still didn't let pass the chance to call down "Estonian fascism." He asserted he had fully done his "duty to the Russian people." "I left Estonia with great satisfaction," he said. "I'm happy I was able to expose Estonia's pro-fascist regime."

Rozhok accused Estonian authorities of rough treatment during his arrest. "They came for me to my place of work, handcuffed me and kept me for two hours in a police lockup. They spit in my face and said they'd anyway shoot me. Only after the arrival of Russian embassy officials did they start behaving more politely," he complained.

He said police escorted him to the border town of Narva where in the presence of Russian embassy officials the deportation papers were finalized. He showed Estonian reporters—the only members of the press who had showed up—a relevant stamp in his passport.

Rozhok said he was going to turn to court to have the expulsion order nullified. His wife filed Friday an appeal against the decision with the Tallinn City Court.

He was unable to say anything about his future plans. Upon arrival in Moscow he didn't yet know where he was going to stay and, judging by the cool attitude of his fellow party members, finding a place to stay may pose a problem.

Rozhok's arrival in Moscow was observed by a man in full uniform of the Estonian paramilitary Defense League. "This person is seriously at odds with my state and my presence at the railway station was intended as a reminder that his problems didn't vanish with the crossing of the Russian-Estonian border," the man, who gave his name as Anton Alekseyev, told BNS.

Latvia

OSCE Mediates Latvian-Russian Military Personnel Issue

LD2503111295 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 25 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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[OSCE] has called for a solution to the issue of the location of the Russian military personnel and their family members in Latvia, contrary to the Latvian-Russian treaty on the army withdrawal, included on the list supplied by Russia. The Foreign Ministry press center reports that the resolution was passed with the agreement of the Latvian and Russian delegations and representatives of the OSCE. The resolution welcomes the Latvian-Russian consultations in settling this issue.

Baltic Armed Forces To Present Unified Air Defense Plan

LD2403212295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0943 GMT 24 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riga, 24 March (TASS)—The concept of the united air defence and control system for Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia will be submitted to the NATO headquarters in Brussels on 12th April. Representatives of the armed forces command of the Baltic states have discussed the model with the NATO experts on Thursday. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Leaves for Talks in Belarus

LD2403164595 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1600 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Summary] Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs, accompanied by a delegation, left today for Belarus to discuss bilateral and multilateral relations.

President, Foreign Minister Meet Chinese Envoy

WS2703075595 Riga DIENA in Latvian 15 Mar 95 p 8

[Report by Janis Kulmanis: "Latvian and Chinese Relations Intensified"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Riga, 14 Mar—Wan Tsen Yang [name as published], ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Latvia, submitted his letter of accreditation today to the president of Latvia, and met with Foreign Affairs Minister Valdis Birkavs. Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen is expected to visit Latvia at the end of March, which was assessed by both Wan Tsen Yang and the foreign minister as a step in the direction of intensifying mutual relations.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Center, both sides approved of the fact that during the last year, relations between the two states have normalized. Birkavs admitted that this represented necessary and correct behavior on the part of Latvia, taking into account the growing role of China in the context of international security and economic cooperation. Both diplomats agreed that it is necessary to reinforce the legal basis for future cooperation—to conclude agreements on air transportation and avoiding dual taxation, among others. At the same time, the Chinese envoy highly assessed the growing role of Latvia in this region of Europe.

In his conversation with the Chinese ambassador, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis stated that more attention should be paid in Latvian-Chinese dialogue to the issue of security. Ulmanis also sent his best regards to the president of China.

Defense Minister Trapans Steps Down

LD2403164695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1603 GMT 24 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, Mar 24 (Interfax)—Latvian Defense Minister Janis Arveds Trapans stepped down on Friday [24 March], reports the press service of the republic's government.

The report says that the minister agreed with the resignation proposal advanced by Prime Minister Maris Gajls.

The prime minister reasoned his decision by Trapans unsatisfactory work. For example, the republic's defense concept is only partially developed. "With all the money earmarked from the budget or received as foreign aid not a single infantry company has been trained for conducting warfare," reports the press service. The optimal composition, structure and goals for development of the national armed forces have not been determined yet, says the report.

Trapans was born in Riga in 1938, however he spent most part of his life in the United States. He was appointed as Latvian defense minister in September 1994. Before his return to Latvia, he was coordinator of the foreign relations department at the research institute of Radio Free Europe and Liberty. For nine years he worked at the headquarters of the U.S. Sixth Army as a civilian. He has dual citizenship, Latvia and the United States.

Lithuania

Danish Prime Minister Meets President, Prime Minister

LD2703111895 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0900 GMT 27 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen continues his official visit in Lithuania. Yesterday the guest was received by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas.

The president expressed his gratitude for Denmark's support in Lithuania's integration into European structures. At the same time he expressed hope that investments by the Danish companies into the Lithuanian economy would be more weighty.

The Danish prime minister stressed that Lithuania's pragmatic foreign policy directed toward improving relations with its neighbors would assist in Lithuania's integration into the European Union and NATO.

The current situation in Russia, Ukraine, and other CIS countries was also discussed. It was stressed that the

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situation in Chechnya should be regulated and that democratic reforms in Russia should be supported.

President Brazauskas informed the Danish prime minister about the measures that are currently taken by Lithuania and other Baltic States in the fight against illegal immigration.

Today Rasmussen met Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius. A meeting and negotiations were held by the delegations headed by both prime ministers.

The Danish prime minister will meet the Seimas foreign affairs committee and members of the delegation for relations with the European Parliament.

Agreements on the setting up of joint enterprises will be signed. A sightseeing tour of Vilnius has also been planned.

An observer from the Danish news agency stressed that on this visit Rasmussen was not accompanied by Danish specialists in industry and trade who usually accompany the prime minister on similar visits. According to the observer this is more a visit of entertainment rather than business.

The first official visit by the Danish prime minister to the former Eastern bloc countries will end in Lithuania tomorrow.

Election Results 'Serious Warning' to Ruling Party

LD2603102995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0904 GMT 26 Mar 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladas Burbulis]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vilnius, 26 Mar—According to the preliminary figures of the Central Electoral Commission, right-wing opposition parties have won the elections to the councils of local self-government that were held 25 March.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent learned at this commission today that the ruling Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP) won only 291 out of 1,488 deputy seats in the councils of the country's 14 towns and 44 regions. Right-wing forces—the Homeland Union party (Lithuanian conservatives), led by the opposition leader Vytautas Landsbergis, and the Christian Democratic Party will be represented in the town and regions' councils by 426 and 247 deputies respectively. By creating a coalition, these two parties will receive an absolute majority of seats in the local government bodies.

In the opinion of experts, the results of the elections are a serious warning to the ruling LDLP, the socio-economic policy of which is enjoying less and less support among the republic's population. More evidence of this is a low turn-out in the elections: fewer than half of the Lithuanian citizens took part in them.

Update on Local Election Results

LD2603153395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1238 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, Mar 26 (Interfax) - The local elections in Lithuania last Saturday were won by the right opposition political forces, Chairman of the Main Election Commission Zenonas Vaigauskas told Interfax today.

The local self-rule administrations were for the first time elected in Lithuania in accordance with the proportional system. People voted for tickets of 17 parties running for the elections instead of concrete candidates.

Vaigauskas said the commission had not received the results of voting in Vilnius and the Salcininkai Region. Without them the number of voters who took part in the elections is about 920,000 (of the total 2.59 million registered voters).

According to preliminary information, none of the 17 parties received the overwhelming majority of votes. Vaigauskas said the majority of voters had cast their ballots in favor of the Tevynes Sajunga (Unit of Fatherland) party created on the basis of the Sajudis public movement and headed by the leader of the parliament's right opposition Vytautas Landsbergis. About 300,000 voters cast their ballots for this party (without yet taking into account Vilnius and the Salcininkai Region).

The opposition Christian-Democratic Party whose position is close to that of the party of Landsbergis, canvassed more than 140,000 votes.

According to preliminary information, the Democratic Party of Labor which now has the majority of seats in the Lithuanian parliament, received about 160,000 votes.

Union of Fatherland Party Does Well

LD2603155595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1431 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, Mar 26 (Interfax) - Representatives of 16 out of the 17 political parties have secured the mandates of members of Lithuania's local governments, Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Zenonas Vaigauskas told a press conference in Vilnius on Sunday [26 March], speaking about preliminary results of the election campaign.

According to preliminary information (the results of the elections in the Salcininkai Region not included) most of the mandates (426 or 29.1 percent) have been secured by the Union of Fatherland party, headed by leader of the right-wing parliamentary opposition Vytautas Landsbergis. As many as 247 seats (16.9 percent) have been won by the opposition Christian-Democratic Party which closely cooperates with the Union of Fatherland.

The Democratic Labor Party, which has the majority of the seats in parliament, is on second place (291 mandates, or 19.9 percent).

The Farmers' Party of Lithuania, established on the eve of the elections, won 6.9 percent of the seats in the local governments, the Union of the Center—5.5 percent, the Social-Democratic Party - 5 percent, and the remaining nine parties - a total of 22 percent of the mandates.

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Vaigauskas believes that in the majority of cities and regions, local governments may be formed up only on the basis of a coalition.

The local elections are being viewed as an indicator of the political parties' influence during the forthcoming parliamentary elections, scheduled for October 1996.

A leader of the party of parliamentary majority, the parliament's vice-chairman Juozas Bernatonis told a press conference in Vilnius on Sunday that "the results of voting are a serious signal that our party must change its policies."

Leader of the Union of Fatherland parliamentary faction Andrius Kubilius stated, commenting on the results of the local elections, that they marked "a total defeat of the ruling party and the population's mistrust in it." He said that the right-wing opposition parties had secured a total of 789 mandates (53 percent). "These results will give a new impetus to the political processes and raise the question:

'Does the majority have the right to pursue the chosen political course?'" he said.

According to preliminary reports, about 43 percent of the electors took part in voting.

The final results are expected to be announced by March 28.

Ethnic Poles' Victories Viewed

LD2603183795 Warsaw TVP Television First Program Network in Polish 1730 GMT 26 Mar 95

[Relayed by TV Polonia Network]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to initial results, the local elections in Lithuania yesterday have been won by right-wing parties, the leader of which is Vytautas Landsbergis. A large success was that of the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania [AWPnL].

[Begin recording] [Correspondent Jerzy Modlinger] The largest victor of these elections is the AWPnL, which succeeded in having its candidates win in almost all the districts where it ran, and won an absolute majority in the Polish regions. In the Salcininkai region it has 14 councillors out of 25, and in the Vilnius region it has 19 out of 27. In the city of Vilnius, to the enormous surprise of its leaders, the AWPnL increased its vote from three to 20 percent and will have 11 out of 51 councillors. In its own regions, the AWPnL wishes to rule alone. There, where it is necessary, it will enter into various kinds of coalitions, not directed in this by the nationality of the councillors involved. Jan Sienkiewicz, from the AWPnL, sticks to his view that the Peasant Party ran Polish candidates so as to split the Polish minority.

[Sienkiewicz] We will enter into blocks and cooperate, frankly, with every party that has representatives, including the parties in whose lists Poles are to be found. This is precisely the context. There will not be some kind of cooperation on the principle of nationality. There will be cooperation based on the principle of cooperation between organizations.

[Modlinger] To the surprise of observers of the Lithuanian political stage, Sienkiewicz has expressed the will to cooperate with the conservatives of Landsbergis rather than the Labor Party of Brazauskas.

[Sienkiewicz] Unfortunately, the left and the Labor Party of Brazauskas has had this attitude in the electoral campaign, that we looked like their main competitors, their main opponents.

[Modlinger] The big losers of these elections, the Poles who ran on the lists of the Peasant Party, say that apparently it is too early for economic and social programs, that it is national rhetoric that still sounds the most attractive. This is, in their view, witnessed to not only by the success of the AWPnL, but of the conservatives of Landsbergis.

The key to the success of the AWPnL was the fact that they took under their wing all the minorities, which here constitute around 20 percent of the population, and almost 50 percent in Vilnius city. It is now possible to fear that this success will arouse nationalist Lithuanian reactions, but it is necessary to hope that the Poles so strengthened will forsake national rhetoric and will feel themselves fully to be the coproprietors of this land, and as which they have just been elected. [end recording]

Seimas Deputies on Local Elections

LD2603192895 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1600 GMT 26 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lithuanian Conservatives won the largest number of votes at the elections to the local councils, and we congratulate them—but in two years we will demand that they report to the voters, andep then we will see how they will keep their promises to increase wages and pensions and where they will get money for this. This was stated today by Gediminas Kirkilas, head of the Seimas parliamentary grouping of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party [LDLP], and his deputy Justinas Karosas, speaking at a news conference at the LDLP headquarters. [passage omitted]

According to Kirkilas, there were no serious violations of the election law on voting day.

Juozas Bernatonis, deputy chairman of the Seimas, speaking at the news conference, said that the local councils have become more rightwing after the elections. It is not the voters who are to blame that only about 45 percent of them turned up to elect local council deputies; we ourselves, the politicians, who failed to make the people become interested, should take the blame; that is why the situation should be analyzed as soon as possible, and may be the policies should be changed, Bernatonis said.

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